

# THE BOOK OF EXPLORERS

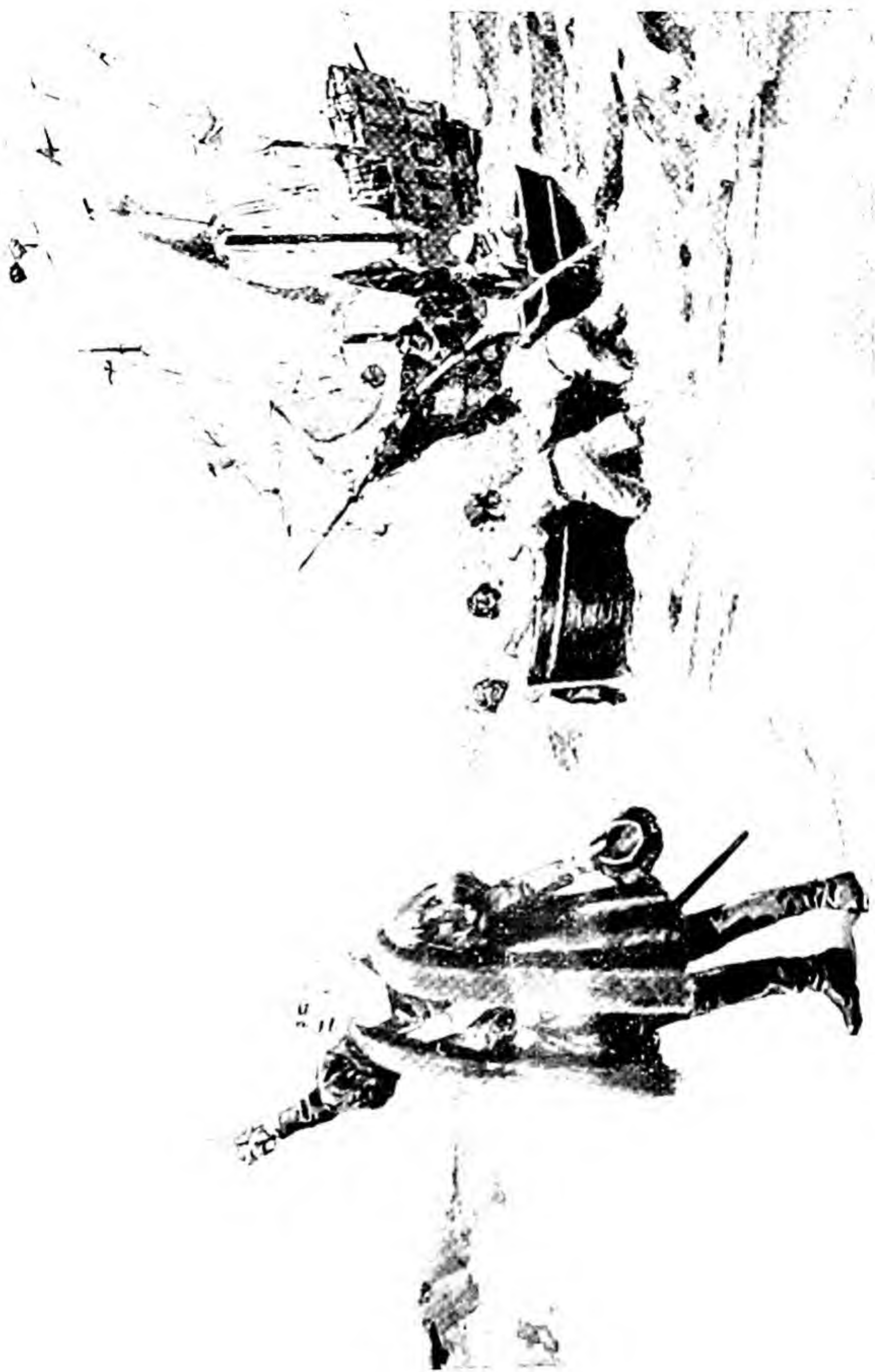


***UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME***

The Book of Pirates







CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS SETS FOOT ON THE SHORES OF THE NEW WORLD

# THE BOOK OF EXPLORERS

BY

ARTHUR L. HAYWARD

Author of "The Book of Pirates", etc.

WITH 8 HALF-TONE PLATES  
AND 12 ROUTE MAPS



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## FOREWORD

I FEEL sure that few boys will want to read a Preface when Columbus, Drake, and Livingstone, with many another gallant figure, are beckoning to them from the pages beyond; so I only write these few lines to say that each of the following stories of exploration and discovery has been retold from the original book, journal, or log in which it was first recorded—sometimes in Spanish, sometimes in French, sometimes in plain, resonant English. I have purposely put the narratives in no definite order, but have just arranged them as it struck me they would make most varied and interesting reading. For those who, like myself, find pleasure in tables and dates, I have added, overleaf, a list of some of the most notable discoveries and explorations in the world's history. Those printed in heavy type are told in the book itself.

I have enjoyed telling these tales of famous men and gallant deeds; I hope that all who read will share in my pleasure.

A. L. H.



## SOME DATES OF DISCOVERIES AND EXPLORATIONS

1271-95	Marco Polo travels to China, India, etc.
1420	Zarco discovers the Madeira Islands.
1486	Bartholomew Dias goes round the Cape of Good Hope
1492	Christopher Columbus discovers America
1493	He finds Jamaica
1497	Vasco da Gama sails to India by the Cape
1500	Pedro Cabral discovers Brazil
1513	Vasco Nunez Balboa sees the Pacific from Panama
1519-22	Ferdinand Magellan sails round the World
1541	Orellana sails down the Amazon
1576	Martin Frobisher explores the North-West Arctic
1577-80	Francis Drake sails round the World
1610	Henry Hudson discovers his Bay
1642	Tasman discovers Tasmania and New Zealand
1768-71	Captain Cook re-discovers New Zealand and Australia
1770	Bruce explores Abyssinia
1776-79	Captain Cook finds the Sandwich Islands
1792	Captain Vancouver explores the Pacific Coast of N. America
1796	Mungo Park explores the River Niger
1801-4	Flinders explores the south coast of Australia
1845-47	Sir John Franklin finds the North-West Passage
1849-56	Livingstone explores the Zambesi and finds Victoria Falls
1858	Burton and Speke discover Lake Tanganyika. Speke finds Victoria Nyanza
1862	Stuart crosses Australia from South to North
1864	Livingstone explores Lake Nyassa and Nyassaland
1864	Baker discovers Albert Nyanza
1876-77	Stanley explores the Congo
1893-97	Nansen crosses the Arctic Ocean and reaches 86° 14' N.
1909	Peary reaches the North Pole
1911-12	Amundsen and Scott separately reach the South Pole

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To  
JULIA

# THE BOOK OF EXPLORERS

## CHAPTER I

### Christopher Columbus Discovers America

**S**TANDING on the cliffs of Portugal, gazing out across the heaving billows of the Atlantic to where the sun goes down in a blaze of glory, time was when men wondered where he sank to and what lay beyond that far rim of the horizon. The Portuguese were clever and daring navigators. When we British knew little beyond our own narrow waters, they had explored far down the west coast of Africa. But yet, when the fifteenth century was drawing to a close, all to the westward of the Azores and the Canary Islands was to them still a dark and mysterious unknown, full of such terrors and so impossible of access that the oldest seamen had scarcely dared even to think of the possibility of venturing thither.

But some time about 1450, in the busy Mediterranean port of Genoa, was born a boy who was destined to alter all this, and to open up a vast new world, richer, greater and stronger than any the old fairy tales had ever pictured. Christopher Columbus was the son of a poor wool-comber, and as soon as he was able to work his father made him a weaver; but while he sat at his loom, throwing the shuttle from one hand to the other, his mind flashed yet quicker, weaving a daring scheme which had come to him as he had played by the water-side, or had listened to sailors' stories.

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Like many an adventurous boy, he ran away to sea when he was little more than fourteen, and finding no one to listen to him among the busy Mediterranean merchants and mariners, he made his way to Portugal to follow the sun and discover those fabulous western isles of the Atlantic which the old map-makers must have marked on their charts for the sole purpose of filling up a gap. Antilla, some of them called this fabulous land; others named it the Island of Brazil, and placed it to the westward of Limerick; yet others charted an Isle of St. Brandan, far to the west of the Canaries.

Fabulous they may seem to us, the islands of the Setting Sun, but to those early mariners they were realities, and to Christopher Columbus realities of the utmost importance, for his great idea was the discovery of a westward route to India, and those islands would be on his way. Indeed, he went to Portugal for the sole purpose of learning all there was to be known of what had so far been discovered, and to perfect himself in the art of seamanship so that he could, with full confidence, ask for help in the great scheme he had conceived.

Scarcely anything is known of how Columbus passed the years of waiting in Portugal. In the intervals, however, of making voyages along the African coast and to Madeira, he spent his time and earned a precarious living by drawing maps and tracing charts. In 1477 he voyaged to England and on to Iceland, and later went south as far as San Giorgio da Mina, the most distant spot on the Guinea coast yet reached. That was in 1482; and it was on his way back from there that he resolved, at last, to put to the test all the schemes he had been maturing for so many years—the plan he had thought out during long night watches as his vessel crawled down the African coast or ventured out to the neighbouring islands.



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Money and protection were both necessary, for he was too poor to buy himself even a good suit of clothes, and without powerful protection he would never have secured a crew to sail with him. So he put up several well-considered arguments and reasons to John II, King of Portugal, all tending to prove that, granted the earth was round, as most philosophers had by then decided, it was clearly possible to make the circuit of it. Continuing from this point, he maintained that, as all the world was known except that portion which joined the East and the West, it was manifestly of advantage to explore that unknown tract and open a seaway to India.

The Portuguese King listened with apparent agreement to all these plans, but before he would give his consent to fit out an expedition, he said that he would have to consult sundry learned men of his council—bishops, philosophers and others whose studies were supposed to have fitted them to appreciate the advantages and possibilities of the new project. Columbus's papers were put before them. One and all they decided against the sailor and even ridiculed his ideas.

But what enraged Columbus even more than their summary dismissal of the scheme that had occupied him for so many years was their duplicity in secretly dispatching another ship to the westward to see if, after all, there was anything in his notion, whilst he himself was kept dawdling about the Court. The caravel they sent out met with a terrific gale, and very soon made her way back to Lisbon with the report that Columbus's scheme was in every way perfectly mad.

Disgusted and enraged, the Genoese sailor quitted the Portuguese Court without more ado, and made his way to Spain, tramping the whole long journey on foot, accompanied by his little son Diego, penniless after his ten years in Portugal, yet with the greatest gift in his hand that ever man had, the gift of the New World.

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It was in the winter of 1484-85 that Columbus, leading his little boy and carrying him over the rocky places, crossed the mountains and tramped the heavy roads from Portugal into Spain. He left Diego at a convent where they had been well-treated, and made his lonely way to Seville where, under the Spanish name of Cristobal Colon, he set up in business as a bookseller.

It was not long, however, before he made friends who appreciated his great learning in all matters of the sea, and listened to his schemes with sympathy, if a little incredulity. One especial patron he found in the Duke of Medina Coeli, and this grandee, in the spring of 1486, introduced him to the great Queen Isabella.

Isabella was the most powerful and the cleverest monarch in Europe. She had heard a lot about this ambitious sailor before he was presented to her, and there was something in him that made her trust him from the first—a certain air of strength and dignity, a sense that he knew what he wanted to do and was able to do it, that made him stand out even among the many striking figures of that magnificent Castillian Court. There was even something in Columbus's appearance that worked in his favour, for Isabella, who had strong English blood in her veins, inherited the fair complexion, auburn hair and blue eyes of the Northerners, and, in striking contrast with the dark and sallow men of Spain, Columbus had red hair, blue eyes and thickly freckled cheeks. He was a big man, too, tall and well-knit.

But however much she sympathized in his plans, the Queen was too shrewd to sanction their undertaking without having first taken advice on the matter. Just as the King of Portugal had done, she placed the whole scheme before a council of clergy, and just as their fellow clerics had done in Lisbon, after long and deliberate consideration the learned doctors reported against Columbus, and even hinted that there was a savour of irreligion about his plans.



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Columbus was in despair. When he heard the decision of the council he strode out into the streets of Cordova, where Isabella then held her Court, and paced up and down. At last a crowd began to collect and jeer at the mad sailor, who was shaking his fists and muttering to himself, who wanted to lose men and money in a wild scheme to cross the uncharted sea. Even the street urchins ran behind him, tapping their foreheads significantly.

A long and weary wait followed, during which Columbus found comfort from the few friends who believed in him. There was a certain dim hope, too, that the Queen, as soon as she could find time amid the many matters that kept her busy, would go into his schemes herself and make up her own mind whether his plans had any foundation. But all this was unsatisfactory. The years were passing and still Columbus found himself no nearer making the voyage which now meant for him his whole life.

At last the long-looked-for summons came, and Columbus hastened to Santa Fé, a town in Granada, where Isabella and her husband Ferdinand were at that time laying siege to a Moorish garrison. On his arrival at Santa Fé he found that his friends had been very active in his interests, for he was received by the Queen most graciously. After listening to his plans she promised to fit out the expedition just as he wished it, and on the 30th of April, 1492, Columbus was made Admiral of the Ocean in all the lands or islands he might discover, and was given two caravels to carry him across the unknown western sea. On the 12th of May he went to Granada and bade farewell to this Queen who had believed in him.

The two vessels allotted to his use lay at the little town of Palos, and required but few repairs to make them ready for sea. But no ship can sail without a crew, and the mariners of Palos flatly declined to sign

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on for a voyage that seemed sheer madness. This deadlock bid fair to put a final quencher to Columbus's hopes, but an influential family of the name of Pinzon, by threats and persuasion, finally succeeded in getting together sufficient men to work the two caravels and a third vessel, larger than either of the others, named the *Santa Maria*.

The *Santa Maria* was a ship of about 100 tons burden, the size of one of the small collier brigs that may sometimes be seen plying up and down our east coast. She had a high poop and a forecastle, and carried three masts, two square-rigged and the mizzen with a lateen sail. The crew numbered fifty-two, including the Admiral and his officers, and some of them came from distant parts. There was one Englishman, who appears on the books as Tallarte de Lajes, but is now supposed to have been one Allard, of Winchelsea, and an Irishman named William of Galway. Columbus himself sailed on the large *Santa Maria*; the other vessels, the *Pinta* of 40 and the *Niña* of 30 tons, were commanded by two Pinzons and each carried eighteen men.

At length everything was ready for the voyage, and Columbus, with the eighty odd men who were to accompany him, repaired to the church of St. George at Palos, where they received Holy Communion, and listened to a sermon from Fray Juan Perez, who bade them trust God and their Admiral. At sunrise on the following day, Friday, 3rd August, the three tiny vessels weighed anchor, crossed the bar, and sailed away to the West, amid the cheers and weeping of the spectators, who watched and waved until the white sails passed out of sight over the rigid line of the horizon. Few expected to see them back again; they had sailed out into the unknown and the unknown would certainly claim them.

Columbus first made for the Canaries, the *Pinta* leading the way, followed by the *Santa Maria*. The



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voyage went well except for an unaccountable accident to the *Pinta*, whose rudder came unshipped—none knew why, though the owners of the vessel, named Rascon and Quintero, were suspected of having caused the accident so that the vessel might be discharged at the Canaries. But on arrival at the Islands, Columbus had the caravel thoroughly overhauled, and her rig altered from lateen to square sails. He then made his course to Gomera, where the little fleet cast anchor on the 2nd September. A few days were spent there in getting aboard a good stock of provisions and water, and when all was ready they sailed again.

Hitherto the voyage had been over known seas, but now the vessels' prows were pointing out to uncharted waters, and as day succeeded day the crew began to grow fearful. Intentionally, or through bad seamanship, the man at the helm continually kept letting the ship's head fall off, and every mile they sailed farther west seemed to cast additional gloom on the ships' company.

Seeing that trouble was likely to brew, Columbus now thought of a trick. He kept two logs—a private one in which he entered each day's run accurately, and a public one in which the distances were materially understated—so that none of the crew had any idea that they had sailed as far from the known world as was really the case. A time came when Columbus was glad of this innocent fraud.

Even the more intelligent men on board were alarmed at a phenomenon they observed when checking their course with the stars, and that was the change in the variation of the compass. As we all know from our maps, the compass needle does not point to the true North, but a few degrees to the West. This variation, as it is called, decreases steadily as one sails westward, until a line is reached, somewhere near Flores in the Azores, beyond which the needle begins to swing across



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to the East. No one had been far enough to notice this before the voyage of Columbus; in fact, the variation of the compass had been very little studied.

Though Columbus himself had a very indistinct notion of what had happened when they crossed this line, he managed to allay the fears of his crew by telling them an elaborate story of how the Pole Star had become erratic in its course, and could not be relied upon. Trust the compass, he said, and all would be well.

The fleet had by this time reached the halcyon region of the Trade Winds, which bore the little vessels ever westward, in such glorious weather that often the crew leaped from the low bulwarks of their boats and swam alongside. Every day was heralded with a wonderful sunrise, and often, as the sun set in splendour, banks of cloud resting low on the horizon deceived the oldest sailors into thinking that the long-looked-for land was at last in sight. Birds began to fly across the decks, too, and some were knocked down and examined with relish; while fish of all kinds were caught—a few new, and some, such as the tunny, old and esteemed favourites.

Presently another scare drove the crews of the little vessels almost to the verge of insubordination. They sailed right into the middle of the Sargasso Sea! Great masses of weed drifted up against the ships, and even the most level-headed nodded ominously and spoke of being clogged and held immovable until all souls on board had perished of hunger or been slain by the sea monsters that doubtless lurked amid the slimy roots.

Columbus himself was puzzled at this new curiosity. But he gained courage from it, too, for as it floated by in great masses of golden glory, contrasting so vividly with the blueness of sea and sky, he pictured to himself that it was drifting from no known land, but must have come from that shore of which he had been dreaming all his life.

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Day after day the wind blew steadily from the East, speeding them on their voyage, yet increasing the alarm of the men who saw in it but another danger. If the wind blew so steadily and constantly away from their own lands, how could they ever hope to sail in its teeth and get back to their homes? Serious trouble would have broken out had not a brisk westerly breeze sprung up on the 22nd September, and thus proved that a fair wind was not constant.

According to the maps by which they were sailing—charts without other authority than the pure imagination of their makers—the three weeks they had been at sea should have brought the fleet of adventurers to the Island of Antilla. So there was no surprise, though great delight, when at sunset of the 23rd September, Alonzo Pinzon, from aboard the *Pinta*, signalled the *Santa Maria* that he had sighted land. All hands were piped on deck, the *Gloria in Excelsis* was sung lustily, the rigging was manned, and every sailor on board each of the ships cheered with heart and lung. But alas! Scarce an hour had passed ere the mirage island drifted away—a bank of cloud.

Long days of calm now came, which did nothing to allay the irritation and suspicion of the men. The weary voyage, the constant bitter disappointments and false alarms, almost destroyed whatever sense of discipline and confidence in their Admiral remained. Columbus tried to pacify and encourage them, but he abated not one jot of his firmness, and calmly told them all that “Whether they complained or not, he would go on until he found the Indies, with the help of God!”

It was on the evening of the 11th October that new hopes were aroused and all fears dismissed. The sea had been rough all that day and on its choppy waves were seen obvious signs of the nearness to land. A green rush was swirled on the tide past the *Santa Maria*, the *Pinta* picked up a pole which had evidently been



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cut by human hands, the *Niña* saw a branch with berries upon it.

At ten o'clock that night Columbus was on the poop of the *Santa Maria*, staring ahead into the darkness, for the moon had not yet appeared. Suddenly he saw something that made him start and call to a certain Pedro Guttierrez, who was standing near. Both men strained their eyes and peered into the blackness. Again they saw it—a faint light, moving uncertainly, far away in the mysterious gloom. Others were called and saw it, too, as though it were a wax taper being raised and lowered, far, far away.

While the officers were discussing this strange thing in an undertone on the poop, a sailor on the forecastle suddenly gave voice: "A light! Land! Land!"

For a time the little crew scarce dared to believe that the land of their hopes lay but a few miles ahead. All hands crowded to the deck and rigging and waited anxiously for the moon to rise. But it was not till 2 a.m. that, from the masthead of the *Pinta*, Rodrigo de Tifana discerned the sandy shore of an island glistening in the moonlight, and once more shouted: "Land! Land!"

The three ships hove to till daylight, then they made for the western end of the island and cast anchor. Columbus and the captains of his two consorts went ashore in an armed boat. As the keels ground against the soil of the new-found world, the Admiral sprang out, the royal standard of Spain in his hands, and after kneeling for a moment in thankful adoration, took possession of the land in the name of the King and Queen of Spain.

The shores were thronged with natives—handsome, naked men armed with spears tipped with fish-bone. They had large dug-out canoes, to hold forty or fifty men each, and in a very short time some of them put to sea and started bartering parrots and skins with

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the men on board the strange white-sailed ships that had come from over the ocean.

Columbus was still far from imagining the wonderful extent of his discovery. He simply thought he had come across one of the islands of the old charts, that lay on his way to India. That he had found one of the outlying islands of a new world did not enter into his calculations. He roughly surveyed the place, christened it San Salvador, and the next day set sail. For many years it was unknown which of the West Indian Islands was Columbus's first landfall; it has now been identified as Watling Island, one of the Bahamas.

After watering his vessels Columbus set sail again, taking with him six of the natives, that they might learn Spanish and then act as interpreters. The next day, after many deceptive cloud-islands, they made land again and called it Santa Maria de la Concepción, though it is now known by the less romantic name of Rum Key.

One by one small islands were picked up in the ensuing days, and still there was no sign of the long-sought mainland of India.

At last, on the 28th October, after some buffeting about by rough winds, they made the mouth of a fine river, affording good anchorage and sweeping down to the sea through the most beautiful country any of those who beheld it had ever set eyes on. It was a river in Cuba, and the bay in which they dropped anchor is now known as Puerto Naranjo. Beautiful trees laden with luscious fruit, gorgeous flowers that scented the off-shore breeze, darting birds of wondrous hues—it was a veritable haven of delight to the sea-worn mariners from the three tiny vessels.

The inhabitants fled at the approach of the white men, abandoning their huts with their fishing tackle and all their household belongings. But Columbus would not allow his men to touch a single thing, for it



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was his purpose to encourage the natives and win their friendship. He called them "Indians," for he now imagined that he was coasting along the shores of India—and Indians the natives of America have been called to this very day.

From what some of the Indians told him, Columbus had great hopes of finding gold; so after he had been some time in Cuba he sent a small embassy, composed of a couple of his crew who could speak Arabic and other Eastern languages likely to be understood by the "Indians," into the interior of the island to make what discoveries they could.

Gold they found none; but they were well received by the inhabitants, and were much struck by a curious habit these natives had of walking about with smouldering bundles of rolled-up leaves held between the lips, which they kept alight by drawing the smoke into their mouths. They called these rolls *tabacos*, and found much pleasure and refreshment in the habit. Whether Columbus and his captains sampled a cigar or not is unrecorded.

From now onwards Columbus hugged the shores of Cuba and made friends with the people. He was delighted with their gentleness and innocence; they came on board and traded with the crew, gave them presents of fruit and cotton, and frankly told the Admiral where he might go to gain the wealth of gold he was already dreaming of.

But the Admiral was not the only victim of the gold-fever. Alonzo Pinzon, who was on board the *Pinta*, a fast-sailing little craft, gave his leader the slip one day, determined to make some spot where he was told that gold abounded. He came back when he failed to find his El Dorado, but Columbus never trusted him again.

Coasting on from Cuba to Hispaniola, they were sailing before a little wind on the night of Christmas

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Even when the first real disaster of the whole voyage occurred. Columbus had been on deck for two days and nights, and at eleven o'clock, being wearied out, he left the ship in charge of the man at the helm and went down to sleep. The night was dead calm, and after a while the man, himself overcome with fatigue, passed the tiller to one of the ship's boys—a proceeding absolutely against the most definite orders.

The whole ship was plunged in slumber when the lad suddenly felt the rudder grate on the bottom and heard the swish of water rushing by. He yelled out in alarm. Columbus was on deck in an instant. But it was too late to save the vessel; she had been carried by a swift current straight across a sandbank, and before they knew what had happened had lodged so deeply in the soft sand that no efforts availed to draw her out. Masts were cut away, she was lightened of all her cargo, but the *Santa Maria* was fast embedded and there was nothing for it but to abandon her.

This caused a change to be made in the Admiral's plans. It was plain that he could not crowd the crew of his largest vessel into the two small ones, so the only thing to be done was to build a small fort and leave the surplus men there while he went home to Europe and came out again with help. This fort was called Navidad, or Nativity, in commemoration of the Christmas Eve on which the wreck occurred, and forty-four men—among whom were our English friend Allard and the Galway Irishman—elected to remain behind, furnished with biscuits enough to last a year, as well as ammunition, wine, and the *Santa Maria's* boats.

On the 4th January the *Niña*, on which Columbus hoisted his flag, weighed anchor and soon afterwards, joined by the *Pinta*, continued coasting along Hispaniola, visiting the bays and islands, while all on board feasted their eyes upon the wonder of all this new world that lay before them.



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One day they saw three syrens, who rose well out of the sea and appeared, as Columbus remarked, not so alluring as they had been described. These mermaids were really manatees—marine creatures with small round heads and forelimbs not unlike arms. Seen unexpectedly and for the first time, they certainly do present a strikingly human appearance as they rise and peer from the water.

Further down the coast they reached the splendid bay of Samana, where Columbus cast anchor and sent a party ashore. But here they met with a very different type of native to those they had grown accustomed to. A sharp scuffle took place, resulting in no deaths, but giving the Indians a healthy taste of what they had to expect if they chose to adopt a warlike attitude.

At last the time for departure arrived. On the 16th January, Columbus weighed anchor for Spain, steering a north-easterly course, which he reckoned ought to bring him safely home. His two little craft, so frail and sea-worn, were hardly fit for the long voyage, even in calm weather, but on the 12th February they were caught in a terrific storm which grew in violence during the next two days, so that not a soul on board ever expected to set foot again on land.

Vows were made, and pilgrimages promised, but still the storm raged. Columbus cared little for his own life, and his thoughts and fears were centred in the horrible dread that his discovery might die with him. The cockle-shell craft was so tossed about that he could scarce write, yet he managed to jot down the chief particulars of his voyage on a piece of parchment, which he wrapped in a waxed cloth and then sealed in a barrel. This was thrown overboard, with a note requesting whosoever should pick it up to send the packet to the King and Queen of Spain.

Happily his precaution was needless—the barrel, by the way, was never picked up. On the 15th the storm

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abated and late that evening land was sighted from the masthead. It was one of the Azores, the Isle of Santa Maria, where the Portuguese were in possession. Suspicious of this stranger who had driven in from the West, and who resolutely kept his mouth shut, they refused any succour and sent him away with ugly threats. But when, on the 4th March, the two boats put into the Tagus, they met with a better reception and Columbus was taken to see King John II, the same who had refused to help him so many years ago and who now listened to his story with amazement.

But Columbus did not stay longer than he could help. He was anxious to lay the fruits of his journey at the feet of the King and Queen of Spain who had made it possible for him. He sailed from Lisbon as soon as he could get away, and on the 15th March cast anchor in the harbour of Palos, whence he had set sail seven months and twelve days before.

What a crowd there was to meet him! Bells clanged from all the steeples, guns boomed forth, cheer upon cheer arose, and amid it all Columbus and his men went to the Church of St. George to render thanks for their safe return. The following day the ten Indians he had brought with him were landed, together with all sorts of curios, relics, and plants. One of the Indians died of sea-sickness and home-sickness the very day they arrived in port, and three others had to be left at Palos, too ill to follow in the triumphal journey to Seville.

Well can it be imagined what a reception Columbus received when he reached Seville. Troops escorted him, an imposing procession was organized, with servants carrying the rare tropical birds and other trophies, and, strangest of all, the Indians from that wondrous new world. Every roof was crowded, the streets were impassable, and high and low flocked to render homage to the explorer. The King and Queen chanced to be away in Barcelona, and thither in due time Columbus proceeded,



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to tell his wonderful story and present his Sovereigns with the keys of the New World.

This ended the first voyage of Christopher Columbus. He made three others, picked up the crew of the *Santa Maria* on Hispaniola, and eventually pushed on to the mainland of Central America; but this first voyage of his was really the masterpiece of his genius, and by it his name will ever be remembered.

And how came it that this new world was not named after the man who found it? Why was it not called Columbia?

It often happens that when one great man achieves some work of real importance, smaller men run after him, at his heels, like little dogs, laying claim to what he has accomplished, and crying, "I thought of it first! It was *my* idea!" No sooner had Columbus come back from the New World than an Italian sailor, named Amerigo Vespucci, announced that he had been there first—that he knew all about it. Columbus was too great and too busy a man to pay attention to this little yapping voice; but while he was getting on with his life's work, Amerigo wrote books and got the map-makers to chart the new land as Amerigo's land—America. Subsequent research has proved, almost conclusively, that he had nothing whatever to do with the discovery of the great twin continents.

## CHAPTER II

### Captain Scott Reaches the South Pole

**T**HERE is a good old English saying "It's dogged as does it!" That is why so many of the greatest deeds this world has known have been done by the dogged courage of men like Captain Scott.

Though not actually the first man to reach the South Pole, Captain Scott's last expedition will always be associated with that great adventure, for its romance and story of dogged British heroism made its appeal to the whole civilized world. It was only by a few weeks that he missed the honour of being the first to set foot at the long sought goal, and the great adventurer who preceded him would have been the last to grudge him a share in the honour of its discovery. Both have perished now—Scott in the frozen South, and Amundsen in the frozen North.

Roald Amundsen's Antarctic Expedition was a masterpiece of organization. It was to be a dash to the Pole and back, nothing else mattered, and every step was taken to make it a success. Having reached the Great Barrier—that wall of ice that seems to forbid man to proceed further—he and his men started by systematically placing depôts of food at regular intervals of some 60 odd miles along the route to the Pole. Instead of men drawing the sledges, as had previously been done, teams of dogs were employed, while the men sped along on skis, to which, hardy Norsemen as they were, all had been accustomed from childhood.

All these preparations were made during the autumn and winter—January to May, in those high southern



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latitudes—of 1911. Then, on the 19th October, the Polar party started their dash. There were five men all told: Amundsen, Bjaaland, Wisting, Hassel and Hanssen, with four sledges, each drawn by 13 dogs. Snow beacons, numbered and marked with directions, were erected every eight or nine miles.

On the 8th November they arrived at the last of their organized supply dumps, in the latitude of  $83^{\circ}$ , over 400 miles from the Pole. Small depôts were now left as they reached the mighty peaks of the Pole, some of which rose to 15,000 ft., until, on the 15th November, they stood at latitude  $85^{\circ}$  where they piled their surplus stores, consisting of provisions for some thirty days; and packing the sledges with bare rations for twice that time, they set off on their run of 683 miles to the Pole and back.

All was easier going than they had ever dared to expect. The mountains were worse to look at than to negotiate; the weather kept fine, and as they sped along in the latitude of  $86^{\circ}$ , they "sweated as if they were running races in the tropics." Dogs were killed as needed for food, and the pace hardly slackened when they struck bad weather. This was when they were over 11,000 ft. high. The going became hard, for breathing was difficult and the cold intense; but on the 14th the Pole was reached. A cairn was erected, in which Amundsen placed the record of his journey, and after three loud cheers they hurried away.

Nothing of note happened on the return, and by the 25th January, 1912, they were all safely back at their base, their object achieved, and no one a whit the worse.

Five days later Scott and his men struggled to the Pole, only to find that they had been forestalled.

Captain Robert Falcon Scott was an experienced Antarctic explorer. In command of the Expedition sent by the Royal and Geographical Societies in 1901-4, he had

## Scott and the South Pole

made some remarkable discoveries—King Edward VII Land, the location of the South Magnetic Pole, the position of the huge Antarctic Ice-cap, and many scientific items concerning depths, the nature of the seabottom, etc. It was but natural, therefore, that when a new expedition was decided upon, the command of it should be given to Captain Scott. An old Dundee whaler, the *Terra Nova*, barque-rigged, and exactly suited for the work, was fitted out, stores and instruments were specially prepared, and a party of experienced officers and men collected. Ponies and dog teams were taken direct from Siberia to New Zealand, whence the expedition was to start.

Scott was especially careful in his selection of the men to accompany him. There were four naval officers, Pennell, Evans, Campbell, and Rennick; two army officers, Bowers and Captain Oates; a large staff of scientific observers under Dr. Wilson, who had been with Shackleton in the *Discovery*; and an expert photographer, Ponting. The crew, too, were all naval ratings with experience. In addition to these was a Norwegian naval officer, who signed on as a ski expert; Day was the motor engineer, and Meares in charge of the dogs.

It was on the 1st June, 1910, that the *Terra Nova* cast off from the West India Docks for the voyage to New Zealand, which was uneventful enough, except for the enthusiasm of the crowds when she called in at the Cape and Melbourne. The expedition was planned to start from Lyttelton, and there the dogs and ponies were awaiting them. A month was spent in the final preparations, and, on 29th November, the *Terra Nova* weighed anchor for the South.

Within the first few days they met with a sample of the ill-luck that seemed fated to pursue them. A terrific storm swept up from the south-east on the 1st December, and for three days the vessel fought the gigantic waves that swept over her. The ponies fared



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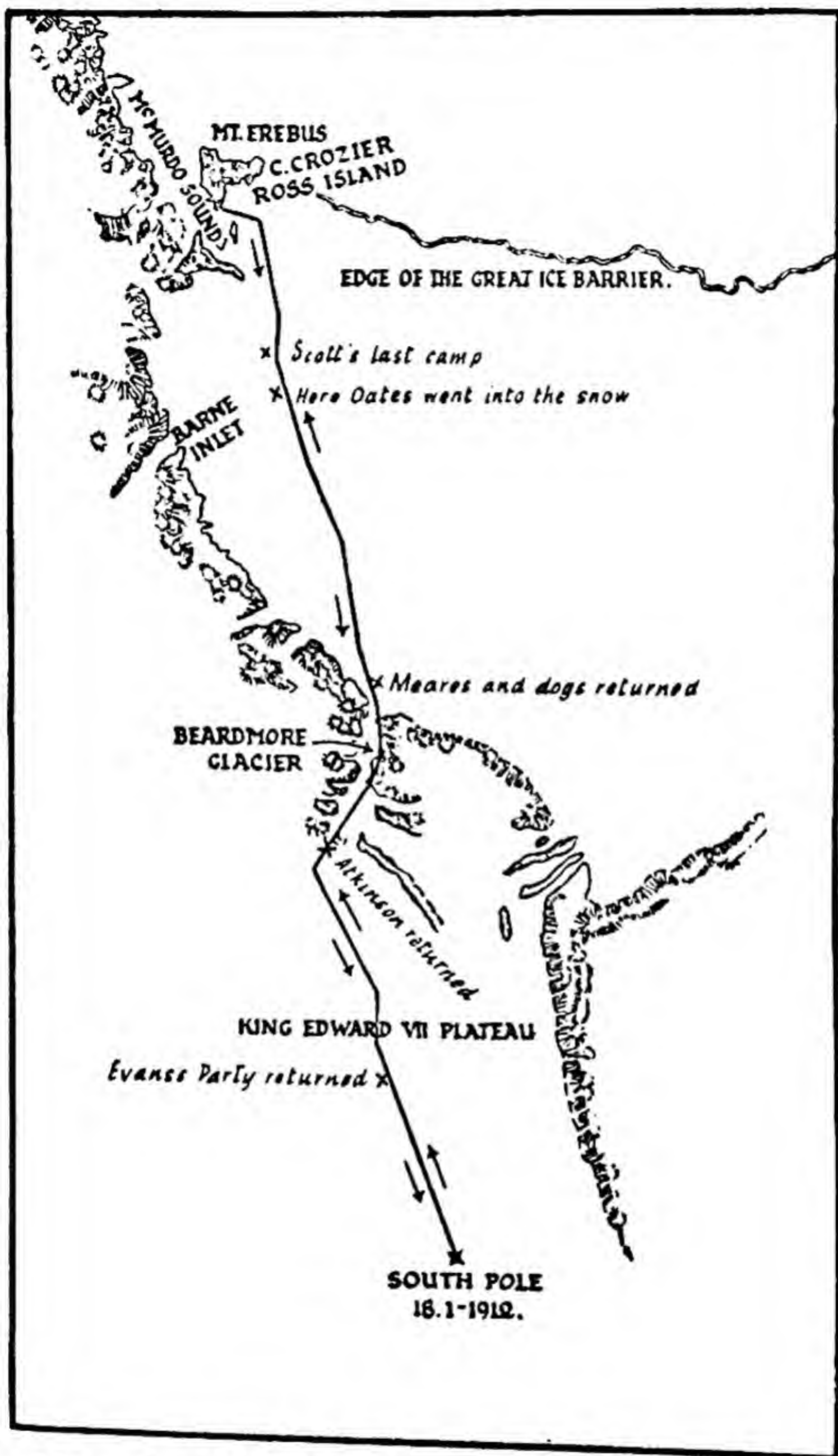
the worst. Great seas swept into their stalls and carried the poor beasts off their legs, and while the storm raged Oates and Dr. Atkinson, one of the surgeons, spent their whole time picking them up and trying to quieten them. A stock of coal had been loaded in bags on the decks, and the seas caught these and hurled them against the other deck cargo of petrol cans and forage, until it became necessary to heave the coal overboard if anything else were to be saved.

Then the pumps choked and water began rising perilously near the boilers; so the fires had to be drawn. The whole crew—officers, men, scientific staff—then set to work baling the vessel out, passing up the buckets in chain, and all the while sheets of water poured in through every possible opening.

At last Scott ordered a steel bulkhead to be sawn through, and creeping into the opening thus made, Evans and Bowers crawled, at the peril of their lives, down to the pump suction, and cleared them of the coal and muck that had choked them. Gradually the pumps began to draw again and the leak was got in hand.

When the storm abated and it was possible to take stock of the damage, Scott found that they had lost 2 ponies, 10 tons of coal, and 65 gallons of petrol. They might well have lost their lives, had it not been for the pluck of Evans and Bowers.

The *Terra Nova* struck the ice on the 9th December, and again her ill-luck was to the fore; for it took her three weeks to get through, whereas on his previous voyage Scott had made clear water after five days. However, on the 3rd January, 1911, land was sighted, and the next day anchor was dropped in McMurdo Sound, where it had been decided to build winter quarters. The stores and animals were put ashore, a house erected from sections they had brought with them, and by the end of the month the little camp was so far



Map of Scott's track across the ice to the South Pole.



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established that preparations could be made for the great venture.

For the time being the *Terra Nova's* work was done. After an unsuccessful attempt to land a survey party farther along the coast, she put about and made her way back to New Zealand, where the Government employed her for many months to come in useful survey and sounding work round the coast.

As soon as his shore party was landed and properly organized Captain Scott began to get ready for his journey to the Pole. On 25th January he started out to place his first depôt, 130 miles away on the southern track. He took 12 men, 26 dogs and 8 ponies, with 14 weeks' provisions for men and beasts. A little over a fortnight later they made their depôt—One Ton Depôt it was called—in 79° 28' S.

The return journey to the camp was marked by two exciting episodes. Scott had sent on the ponies by a different route, and with three companions was trying a short cut home with the dogs. One day, as they were speeding over the snow, the dogs racing along at full tilt and the men running alongside, Dr. Wilson suddenly shouted: "Hold on to the sledges!" The next instant the whole team disappeared through the snow into a vast crevasse, which had been but lightly bridged over, and hung dangling by their harness, howling and barking with fright. The sledge was hauled clear and anchored, and the animals were drawn up carefully in couples. But two had fallen out of their collars, and were barking far below on a ledge of snow upon which they had fallen.

With an Alpine rope tied round him, Scott was lowered into the abyss, and rescued the two dogs. But it was all his companions could do to haul him up again, so badly were their hands bitten with the frost. He might easily have lost his life, but all he thought about, once the dogs were safe, was to seize this splendid opportunity of examining the sides of a crevasse!



*Photo: National Film Library*

### CAPTAIN SCOTT AT THE SOUTH POLE

The tent, surmounted by the Norwegian flag, was left by Amundsen, who had reached the Pole a month earlier. The photo was taken by Lieut. Bowers, and reading from left to right the figures are Scott, Oates, Wilson, Evans.





## Scott and the South Pole

The ponies, meanwhile, had met with real disaster. As they were trotting over the frozen sea, the surface suddenly broke into wide lanes of water. Two of the unlucky creatures were carried away beyond reach of rescue, and several others were dragged out of the freezing water, but being caught in the icy wind, died of cold and pneumonia.

The party now settled down to the long winter that was soon to be upon them. Built on a sandy beach, their house had been arranged to give the utmost comfort possible in such a place. The walls and roof were of double thickness, packed with seaweed, and the interior was divided into two large rooms—one for the sixteen officers and the other for the nine men. In addition to these there were rooms for instruments, a dark room, and store-rooms. The surviving ponies, ten in number, were housed in warm stables beside the dogs. The cases of stores were arranged on the beach handy for use.

On the 23rd April, they bid adieu to the sun, and the dreary winter set in. There was work for all to do, however; ponies to be exercised, scientific and other calculations to be worked out, lectures given, and the *South Polar Times* produced and read. Everyone pulled his weight, and the utmost good temper and cheerfulness reigned.

There was one expedition that had to be undertaken in the depths of the winter, and that was a visit to an Emperor penguin rookery, to obtain eggs for scientific purposes; for these queer birds only nest in July, the coldest month of the Antarctic year. So, on 27th June, Dr. Wilson, Lieut. Bowers, and Cherry Garrard set off with two sledges and enough food to last them five weeks.

The temperature was down to  $-56^{\circ}$  F., which meant 88 degrees of frost. The Ross Sea was solid ice.

At last they got to the great rookery, which could

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only be reached by clambering down the steep mountain side to the frozen shore. The great birds gaped in astonishment at the strange creatures who had come to disturb their solitude, but they were too stupid or surprised either to totter away or to resist. Six eggs were obtained and three birds killed and their skins carefully packed.

Then began the task of making the steep ascent in the teeth of a gale that grew so furious that it blew their tent away bodily and ripped the roof off a stone hut they had erected. When the storm subsided somewhat, Bowers went off in search of the tent and found it a quarter of a mile away, luckily for them unharmed.

They were now faced with the ordeal of the return journey, rendered all the worse because their sleeping-bags had frozen stiff and afforded no warmth. But they reached camp safely on 1st August, after performing what Scott himself called "One of the most gallant episodes in Polar history. That men should wander forth in the depth of a Polar winter to face the most dismal cold and the fiercest gales in darkness is something new; that they should have persisted in their efforts in spite of every adversity for five weeks is heroic."

Meanwhile, preparations for the Polar dash were in full swing. It was intended to work the ponies to the foot of the glacier and there kill them for fresh food. Further progress would then be made by man-handling the sledges. The motor sledges which had been brought on the expedition, and which Scott had hoped would solve all the transport difficulties, had soon proved useless.

Distant depôts were planned at intervals, six of them in all, and arrangements were made for dividing the party into three smaller companies, each of four men.

The great start for the South was made on 1st November, 1911. On the 15th they all reached One



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Ton Dépôt, and shortly afterwards the ponies were shot, as had been planned, and the dog teams sent back under Meares.

A huge glacier now lay in front of the explorers, and a wild gale seemed to warn them that the South was going to fight for its secret. Snow fell in great quantities, making progress slow and arduous, and the danger of the crevasses was increased by the white mantle that had been cast over everything. Again and again did some member of the party disappear into an abyss; his only safeguard being the harness, which all wore as much for protection as for dragging the sledges.

In face of every difficulty the top of the glacier was reached three days before Christmas. They were now over 7,000 ft. high, and in the latitude of  $85^{\circ} 13' S.$  A dépôt was formed here, Upper Glacier Dépôt it was christened, and having packed their sledge loads in the cairn and regretfully bid their comrades farewell, Cherry Garrard, Atkinson, Wright and Keohane turned their faces backwards and retraced their steps to the camp.

There were now two companies left, the first consisting of Captain Scott, Wilson, Oates and E. Evans; and the other of Commander Evans, Bowers, Crean and Lashly.

As the goal drew nearer the anxiety and enthusiasm of all concerned in this great adventure increased, though the cold and discomfort in that rarefied atmosphere might well have been enough to stifle any zeal. But they pushed on steadily, and at  $86^{\circ} 55' S.$  made a fourth dépôt, in which was stored a week's food for both companies. This was called Three Degree Dépôt, for only three degrees—180 miles—remained to be traversed.

Another farewell was taken on 2nd January, 1912, by which time they had reached  $87^{\circ} 32'$ , and were 9,600 ft. above sea-level. Bowers joined Scott's party, and the three others, Commander Evans, Crean and Lashly, began their homeward journey. This in itself

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proved an epic of bravery, for on the way the Commander fell ill of scurvy, and rapidly became so much worse that only with the utmost difficulty were his companions able to get him as far as Corner Camp, some distance short of their base. Lashly remained behind to nurse him, while Crean went off alone through the waste of snow and ice to summon help. Luckily he managed to reach Dr. Atkinson in time, and between them they got the sick man down to Hut Point, where he was nursed back to health. Crean and Lashly received the Albert Medal for this piece of bravery and stoical endurance, and no men ever deserved it better.

Scott and his party of four were now a bare 140 miles from the South Pole. They had food for a month, and a well-planned series of depôts to enable them to make the return journey with safety.

By the 4th January they had ascended to 10,280 ft. It was heavy going, for the snow lay soft and the sledges were hard to drag. Still they climbed, up and up, until by the 7th they had reached their highest point, 10,750 ft. above sea-level. From there the ground began to slope downwards, and a week later their instruments recorded only 9,930 ft.

Let Scott himself describe the work of the party at this moment:

"It is quite impossible to speak too highly of my companions. Wilson, ever on the look-out to alleviate the small pains and troubles incidental to the work, ever thinking of some fresh expedient to help the camp life, tough as steel on the traces, never wavering from start to finish. Evans, a giant worker with a really remarkable head-piece. It is only now I realize how much has been due to him. Bowers remains a marvel—he is thoroughly enjoying himself. Nothing comes amiss to him, and no work is too hard. Oates goes hard the whole time, and does his share of camp work."

It was on the afternoon of the 16th, as they were



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plodding along, buried in their own thoughts, that Bowers suddenly looked up and saw something black, far away in the waste of snowy whiteness. What could it be? Was it possible—had Amundsen——?

With something like a sickening feeling at their hearts they hurried forward to find a black flag fluttering from a sledge-bearer, and all around the signs of a recent camp—footprints of men and dogs! Their worst fears were realized! Here they were, within a few miles of their goal, and they had been forestalled!

A couple of days later they reached the Pole, to find its site marked by Amundsen's tent, with the message showing that he had been there just a month before them.

A gale was blowing, and the cold was intense. "This is an awful place," writes Scott, and the keen disappointment all felt did little to alleviate its horrors.

There was nothing more to do but go back. With little relish for the work they erected a cairn and broke the Union Jack; then they faced once more the dreary route by which they had come. The disappointment weighing on their spirits soon had its effect on their health, for Evans and Oates began to suffer from frost-bite, though hitherto they had kept fit.

The return journey was begun on the 19th January, and on the last day of the month they reached Three Degree Dépôt—slow going but safe enough. Ten days later they turned aside to a moraine under the lee of Mount Buckley, where they got shelter from the wind and found most interesting fossils, some of which they took away in the sledge, to the weight of 35lb. To scientists this has been a matter of great importance, for it gave information on the geological formation and history of the South Polar regions.

It was their last day of happiness. Evans's health had not only grown serious—his mind gave way on 16th February, and the next day he died suddenly.



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With leaden hearts the others left him in the cold and snow he had fought against so well.

On the 18th they reached Lower Glacier Dépôt, and before them lay the long stretch of barrier ice between them and home.

Here they found the cached pony meat, and for a time things looked brighter; but the cold was beyond all expectation, and the surface so rough that it was impossible to make the speed they should have done if their food was to last them. All the same, they made Middle Barrier Dépôt on 2nd March, only to find that most of the petrol, which was what they depended on for cooking their food, had leaked away.

They started off at once. The cold now began to affect them all, and Oates's feet were so severely frost-bitten that every step was agony. They were still unable to make sufficient progress, for the surface grew worse and their strength grew less. "Amongst ourselves," said Scott, "we are unendingly cheerful, but what each man feels in his heart I can only guess."

On 6th March Captain Oates had to give up his place at the sledge. He could no longer pull, and his pain was intense. Still he dragged himself on, with always a cheery word and never a suggestion of what he was suffering. A bitter gale was blowing on the 17th, and the little party clung to their tent. It is only fitting that Scott himself should tell what happened then:

"Should this be found I want these facts recorded. Oates's last thoughts were of his mother, but immediately before, he took pride in thinking that his regiment would be pleased with the bold way in which he met his death. We can testify to his bravery. He has borne intense suffering for weeks without complaint, and to the very last was able and willing to discuss outside subjects. He did not—would not—give up hope till the very end. He was a brave soul.

"This was the end. He slept through the night

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before last, hoping not to wake, but he woke in the morning—yesterday. It was blowing a blizzard. He said, 'I am just going outside, and may be some time.' He went out into the blizzard, and we have not seen him since. . . . We knew that poor Oates was walking to his death, but though we tried to dissuade him, we knew it was the act of a brave man and an English gentleman. We all hope to meet the end with a similar spirit—and assuredly the end is not far."

It was not.

By March 21st they had struggled to within eleven miles of One Ton Camp—only eleven miles from supplies and possible help! All the way, staggering with cold and frostbite, they had dragged their thirty-five pounds of fossils; now they pitched the tent and sank within it exhausted. Scott's feet were terribly frost-bitten, and they had no means of cooking a meal or gaining a little warmth. If only they could establish the tent securely, the other two meant to hurry on to the depôt and return with fuel and food.

But the South had beaten them! A furious gale made any attempt to reach One Ton Depôt impracticable, so the three men closed the tent and settled themselves to await the end. Scott wrote on and on, letters to his friends and relatives, entries in his journal, and an appeal to his countrymen which all who take pride in the name of Briton should read.

These are the last words this gallant seaman wrote. The feeble pencil-scrawl, growing weaker and weaker, can be seen in its case in the British Museum, and every boy who can should make a point of going to read it:

"March 29.—Since the 21st we have had a continuous gale from W.S.-W. and S.-W. We had fuel to make two cups of tea apiece, and bare food for two days on the 20th. Every day we have been ready to start for our depôt *eleven miles away*, but outside the door of the tent it remains a scene of whirling drift. I do not think



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we can hope for any better things now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far.

"It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more.

"R. SCOTT.

"For God's sake look after our people."

When, seven months later, Dr. Atkinson and his search-party arrived at the spot, they discovered the tent partially snowed up, from a distance looking like a cairn. In front of it were the ski sticks and a bamboo, probably the sledge mast.

Wilson and Bowers were found as they had fallen asleep, their sleeping-bags closed over their heads, as they would naturally have closed them. Scott had died later. He had thrown back the flaps of his bag and opened his coat. Beneath his shoulder was the wallet containing his three note-books, and his arm lay flung across Wilson.

Oates's body they never found, for the snow had covered it; but a cairn was placed as near the spot as could be judged, and on it was inscribed the immortal epitaph:

"Hereabouts died a very gallant gentleman, Captain Oates, of the Inniskilling Dragoons. In March, 1912, returning from the Pole, he walked willingly to his death to try and save his comrades beset by hardships."



## CHAPTER III

### Mungo Park and the River Niger

"Geographers on Afric Maps  
With savage pictures fill their gaps,  
And o'er unhabitable downs  
Place elephants for want of towns."

**I**T was in these biting words that Dean Swift laughed at the ignorance of the map makers of his time.

Yet, curiously enough, almost a hundred years later they were scarcely any wiser. What is more, nobody cared very much. The traders and merchants were satisfied by the immense wealth in gold and ivory that was to be obtained along the western coasts of the huge continent. There was another and even more profitable trade to be made in the slaves, brought down to the coast in droves like so many cattle, who were shipped across to America, or wherever a good market offered.

So, little or nothing was known of the African interior. One or two half-hearted and quite ineffectual journeys had been made a few miles into the bush, but the hostility of the natives, many of whom were reputed to be cannibals, and the difficulty of making any headway through the dense forest, with its dangers from poisoned arrows and savage beasts, soon sent the most intrepid of these explorers back to the coast.

All sorts of curious ideas were held regarding the vast depths of the interior. The Niger, the third largest of the great African rivers, was supposed to flow due west from some huge lake far inland, probably the same that gave its water to the Nile. The fierce cannibal tribes that dwelt along its banks were credited

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with all sorts of strange deformities and monstrous natures; animals never seen on the earth or, for the matter of that, in the wildest dreams, were reported as denizens of its forests and swamps; while the craziest legends of mysterious cities, of mountains piercing the sky, and fathomless abysses were eagerly believed by the ignorant.

Mungo Park, the intrepid man who was to penetrate this black country and prove the pioneer of many famous African explorers, was a Scot from Foulshiels, near Selkirk, where he was born in 1771. His father was a small farmer, who wished his son to be a doctor and sent him to study at Edinburgh. There young Mungo soon distinguished himself as a botanist, though he also made a success of his study of medicine, so that when he was no more than twenty-one he obtained the appointment of assistant-surgeon on the East India-man *Worcester*, bound for Sumatra. On his return from the Far East he read a paper before the Linnean Society in London, describing his observations in Sumatra, and giving details of eight new fishes he had discovered in those distant waters.

A few years before this time an African Association had been founded by prominent scientists and men of knowledge headed by Sir Joseph Banks, the president of the Royal Society, whose name we shall come across again when he sailed with Captain Cook, and who was one of the greatest pioneers in all sorts of learning there has ever been. The aim of this Society was to explore the interior of Africa, and more particularly to discover the source of the Niger. A Major Houghton was the first to be sent out, but in the depths of Senegal he was brutally murdered and no record of his discoveries has ever been found.

On his return from the voyage to Sumatra, Mungo Park offered his services to Sir Joseph Banks and was at once appointed to lead an expedition to find the



## Mungo Park and the Niger

source and trace the course of the Niger, and at the same time to visit the chief towns of Timbuktu and the Hausa country.

It was as risky a journey as any told in this book, for the only man who had attempted it had been cruelly done to death, and it seemed more than likely that his successor would meet the same fate. When once Park left the neighbourhood of the coast he could expect no help, nor would he even be able to leave any indication of where he had gone.

On May 22nd, 1795, Mungo Park sailed from Portsmouth in a small trading vessel called the *Endeavour*, and exactly a month later landed in Gambia. Without wasting any time in the coast port he set off immediately for Pisania, a town some hundred odd miles up the Gambia River, where a Dr. John Laidley managed a warehouse—or “factory,” as it was called. There he stayed some six months, learning the language of the Mandingo, which was generally spoken, or understood, throughout the parts he hoped to visit, and at the same time making an exhaustive study of native life.

At last, early in December, he decided that he was ready to start, and bidding good-bye to Dr. Laidley, he set off on his perilous journey, accompanied by a negro named Johnson (who spoke English), and a black lad, called Demba. Park rode on horseback, and his two followers on donkeys. They had food for two days, and a small supply of tobacco, beads, and other gew-gaws with which to pay their way. In addition to this, Park took a bag with a few clothes, and some instruments and papers, which were carried in his top hat—for with that headgear, and an umbrella, did this explorer embark upon a journey into one of the hottest and least civilized parts of the world!

For some ten days they made their way through dense forests inhabited by friendly Mandingoes, who



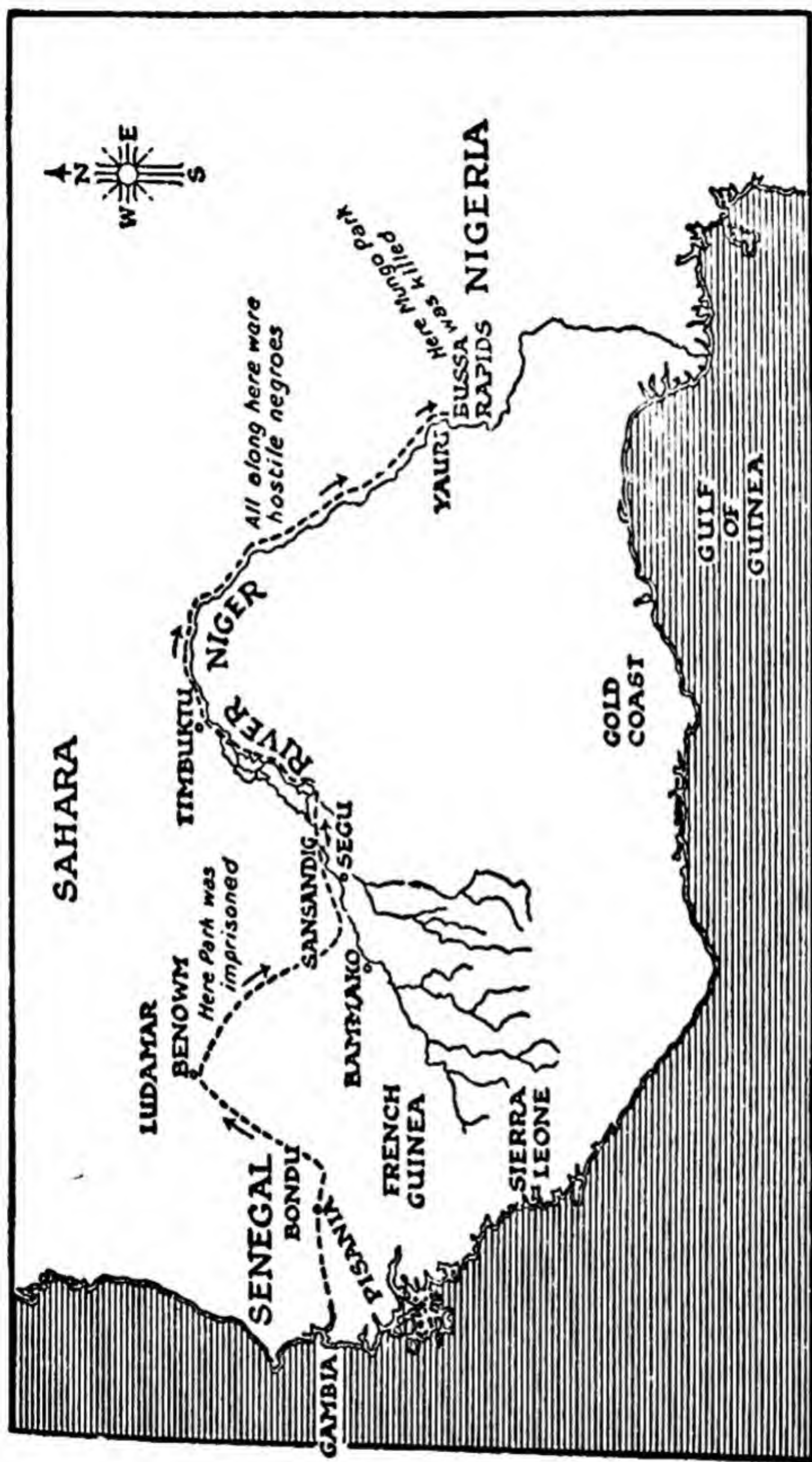
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gave them food and whatever else they desired. But Park did not tarry, for he was anxious to proceed with his journey. So they pushed on into Bondu and reached its capital, Fatticonda.

Park's predecessor, Houghton, had passed through Fatticonda and had been ill-treated there, so Park thought it advisable to pave the way with a present of gunpowder, some amber, and a gorgeous umbrella: gifts warranted to avert the king's wrath. He thought it as well, too, to make as imposing a show as he could, and to hand these gifts to the king in full panoply of state. So, after concealing in the thatch of the hut he was staying in a few things of which he did not wish to be robbed, he put on a grand new blue coat, with flowing tails and resplendent brass buttons, and repaired to the royal palace.

Thus attired, and armed with his grand umbrella, he appeared in the King's presence. His majesty graciously accepted the umbrella; but he did not seem satisfied—he had seen such things before. What really made his mouth water was Mungo Park's blue coat with the brass buttons, and after a few scarcely veiled hints, he asked for it downright. It need hardly be added that the explorer put the best face on the matter he could, and handed over the garment, complete with buttons.

After leaving Bondu, Mungo Park had an unpleasant experience of the jealousy of the tribes among whom he was travelling. The King of Kajaaga, indignant that his neighbour of Bondu had received such valuable gifts, accused Park of entering his realm without paying the customary fees, or dues, and, as a punishment, seized upon all his effects. Had it not been for a providential meeting with yet another petty monarch, the King of Kasson, he would have been stripped naked and left to languish in prison. The King of Kasson rescued him—in consideration of a present, needless to say—and



Mungo Park's route from Gambia to the Niger, which he followed as far as Bussa Rapids.



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took him to his own capital, where he stayed over Christmas, and paid for his hospitality by the loss of half his few remaining goods.

All this while there was still no word of the great river he hoped to strike soon—the Niger. So he pushed on through the land of Ludamar, a Moorish kingdom full of bandits, where he lost practically all that was left of his property. But, however shamefully the Moors treated him, Park invariably remained on good terms with the negroes, and he was in high hopes of getting out of Ludamar and making for some black kingdom where he would be better received, when Ali, the faithless king of the country, sent troops to arrest him and carry him to Benowm.

It was on the 7th March that this disaster happened, and for the next four months Mungo Park's life was unbroken torture. It was the hottest season of the year, and he lay chained in a stuffy hut from which he could only crawl into the burning rays of the sun. At midnight he was sometimes given a little boiled corn and filthy tepid water; but often enough the lazy slaves forgot to take him even that pittance, and would neglect him for two or three days at a time.

He would certainly have died had not Fatima, Ali's wife, secretly sent him morsels of food to save him from starvation. Then came fever, and there was none to nurse him or even go and speak to him; indeed, when the ravings of the fever were at their worst, his cruel captors crowded round his hut, jeered at his ravings and teased him into frenzy. Long afterwards, when he was sleeping safely in his home in Scotland, he would jump up shrieking, living again in nightmare through the horror of that time.

During one of these fits of fever Park broke free and, crazy with thirst, made his way to a well where water was being drawn. He was driven away from that well and from others he approached; but at last he came to



## Mungo Park and the Niger

one where there were only an old man and two boys. The old fellow drew him up a bucket and was about to let him drink when he recollected that his suppliant was an infidel. Instantly he snatched the bucket from Park's lips and emptied it into a trough, where the fever-stricken man, thrusting his head between two thirsty cows, lapped up the water until all three were finally contending for the last few drops.

Tired at last of his cruelty, and seeing there was nothing more to be got out of his captive, Ali gave Park a chance to escape. His boy Demba had already been sold into slavery, and Johnson refused to go any farther, so Park sent him back to Dr. Laidley, with a letter to say that he was well and about to resume his journey to Bambara! He could write this after the misery of four months during which he had lived in constant pain, privation and danger. Of such is the spirit of explorers!

Alone, with nothing but a horse he had managed to steal and the invaluable top-hat in which were still his papers and valuables, Park now traversed a desert of white sand, where there was not a single oasis. He had only a few handfuls of green corn to eat and nothing to drink. One night he fell down in a stupor, and would have died had not a rain-storm brought him again to consciousness.

At last he struck a verdant land of streams, and woods abounding in wild beasts. The negroes received him kindly enough, though even they were unfavourably impressed by his ragged appearance, and the very slaves of a caravan he joined were ashamed to be seen with him.

But little did Mungo Park care what they thought or did, for, on 21st July, as the long caravan trailed into Segou, the capital of Bambara, there, glistening before his weary eyes and flashing in the burning light of the morning sun, was the mighty Niger, "as broad as the Thames at Westminster!"

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There was something of a surprise in store for him when he reached the water's edge, for the current was sweeping on its majestic course *eastward*—the totally contrary direction to what he had expected, though his suspicions had been aroused more than once by curious things he had heard from natives, who, in their crude, disjointed way, told him that it made a magnificent curve to the south and west.

The river was thronged with canoes and ferries. Segu was, in fact, a large and busy city of some 30,000 souls. But the king would have none of this white foreigner who had penetrated his capital. He refused so much as to see him and dismissed him to a distant village, where he was told to await the royal pleasure without a roof over his head or any prospect of receiving help or shelter.

Park sat himself beneath a tree and again contemplated death. At last some native women brought him food and took him to a hut. He had nothing left to give them as a reward except a couple of the four remaining brass buttons that adorned his waistcoat.

In his own good time the king condescended to order Park to leave Segu while he allowed him life to do so. Before going, however, he made his way a little further along the river to Silla. But at last he reluctantly realized that he must go back to the coast, to come again, if possible, better prepared for the hardships of his journey.

So, with a heavy heart, Mungo Park turned his steps westward, to traverse six hundred miles of hostile land with no provisions, no companions, no arms. Sometimes he was forced to wade breast-high through streams that crossed his path; occasionally he had to make long detours in order to avoid hostile villages or towns; and at the end of August, when he was still five hundred miles from the nearest European face, he was attacked by a party of Moorish marauders, who took away his





MUNGO PARK'S LAST STAND AT BUSSA RAPIDS





## Mungo Park and the Niger

horse, stripped him naked, stole his pocket-compass, and left him lying on the ground with nothing but a shirt, a pair of breeches—and the famous top-hat still stored with notes and manuscripts. The black rogues thought the whole affair, top-hat and notes combined, some powerful magic which might bring ill-luck, so had best be left alone.

Park was now in a worse state than he had ever been before, but his old Scots training stood him in good stead. Miserable, thirsty, and hungry, with no prospect but to perish in the wilderness, he knelt down and prayed for Divine help. Then he arose, donned his hat, shirt and breeches, set his course by the sun and trudged off on his weary way. About ten days later he fell in with the head man of a village, who restored to him the rest of his clothes and horse, as well as the shivered remains of his pocket-compass.

Fever now attacked the explorer, and but for the kindness of a black slave-dealer, named Karfa Taura, he would have succumbed. For five weeks this man nursed him carefully, and sheltered him for six months longer—while he was trying to regain his strength. As Karfa was then starting off to the coast with a caravan of slaves, Park seized the chance of accompanying him.

The horrors of this slave caravan will not bear repeating; scarcely able to move for their great leg-irons, loaded like beasts of burden and thrashed with cruel hide thongs, the poor wretches were driven five hundred miles, often at the rate of thirty miles a day, to the market where they were sold, or perhaps dragged back into the interior again, loaded with yet heavier burdens.

It was on the 12th June, 1797, two years after he had landed in Africa, that Park found himself back in Pisania. He set off at once for the coast, and after other adventures by sea and land, which cannot be told here, he reached London on Christmas Day.

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Although the story of Park's first journey reads as though it had been something of a failure, it was by no means so in reality, for he had made many interesting discoveries, besides having found out how the Niger flowed. He had seen new plants, and had made many notes regarding the natives and their habits which were of the utmost value to the men of science at home.

After his return from the wilds of Africa, Mungo settled down to a medical practice in Scotland, where he made many friends, among them being Sir Walter Scott, with whom he rapidly became intimate. In 1804, however, when the Government decided upon another expedition into the African interior, they naturally asked Park to lead it. He agreed readily enough, and set off at once for London.

As he was bidding Sir Walter farewell, his horse stumbled. "I am afraid that is a bad omen, Mungo," said Scott. "Freits [omens] follow those that look to them," retorted the explorer.

On the 30th January, 1805, Mungo Park set sail from Portsmouth, and three months later arrived at Pisania. Being a Government expedition, this second party was in considerable force. There were thirty-five European soldiers, two sailors, six white carpenters, and full equipment to build two 40-ft. boats to sail on the Niger.

On the 4th May they all started, guided by a Mandingo named Isaaco. Their effects were packed into red-painted packages and borne on some fifty asses, and the whole expedition was divided into three parties, commanded respectively by an artist named Scott, Lieutenant Martyn, and Park himself, who, with his brother-in-law, Anderson, marched in the rear.

They met trouble early. Scarcely had they been a fortnight on the way before Isaaco was robbed and imprisoned, and had to be redeemed at a heavy cost. A few days later, at a place they called Bee Creek, they



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were attacked by bees, which stung some of the horses to death, while others stampeded in frenzy. A little later they were caught in a tempest of rain that flooded the camp with three inches of water. The very next day twelve of the white soldiers were laid up in the throes of dysentery and malaria. These invalids had to be carried along with the expedition, and so exhausting was the work beneath a blazing sun, that some of the sound men fell victims to sunstroke.

As they made their way into the mountains of Senegal matters grew worse; the overburdened donkeys slipped on the rough tracks, and as most of the men were hanging on to the harness the confusion was extreme. One day, Isaaco was caught by an enormous crocodile and dragged into the slimy depths of the river; but he had the presence of mind to stick his fingers into the beast's eyes until it opened its great jaws in pain, and so was lucky to escape with torn thighs that in places were gashed with wounds four inches deep.

Every day, meanwhile, was reducing the numbers of the expedition. By the time they reached the banks of the Niger at Bammako, on the 19th August, only a fourth of those who had set out from Pisanía were still alive. Amongst those who had perished by the way was the artist, Scott.

At Bammako was Karfa Taura, the man who had saved Park's life in the first journey, and, at his advice, Isaaco was sent on to Segou with a handsome present to placate the king who had behaved so churlishly to Park before. Though he accepted the arms and other valuable gifts Isaaco brought, this haughty monarch absolutely refused to admit the explorers to his presence. But he gave them a grudging permission to pursue their journey.

They pushed on to Sansending, and here three of them made a sort of large punt, 40 feet long, with 6 feet beam, which they christened the *Joliba*. It

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was here that Park's brother-in-law died, reducing the expedition to only nine persons—Park, Martyn, three privates, three negroes, and a Mandingo interpreter named Amadi Fatuma. Foreseeing trouble, maybe, Isaaco determined to return to Pisanía, and to him were entrusted all Park's papers with full accounts of his observations and discoveries.

No man ever saw Mungo Park's handwriting again!

One of these letters gives a graphic picture of the explorers at this dreadful pass. "I am sorry to say," he says, "that of forty-four Europeans who left the Gambia in perfect health, five only are at present alive—namely three soldiers (one deranged in his mind), Lieutenant Martyn and myself . . . but I assure you I am far from despairing. With the assistance of one of the soldiers I have changed a large canoe into a tolerably good schooner, on board of which I this day hoisted the British flag, and shall sail to the east with the fixed resolution to discover the termination of the Niger, or perish in the attempt.

"I have heard nothing that I can depend on respecting the remote course of this mighty stream, but I am more and more inclined to think it can end nowhere but in the sea. My dear friend Mr. Anderson, and likewise Mr. Scott, are both dead; but, though all the Europeans who are with me should die, and although I myself were half dead, *I would still persevere*; and if I could not succeed in the object of my journey, I would at last die on the Niger."

Nothing more was ever heard of Mungo Park!

As time went on without a word from him, those who had followed his adventures with interest began to grow anxious. At last the most sanguine realized that it was only too certain that the few remaining explorers had perished. A few years elapsed, and in 1810 Colonel Maxwell, who was at that time Governor of Senegal, dispatched Isaaco into the interior to find out, if he



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could, what had been the fate of Mungo Park. Another two years elapsed before he returned to tell how he had met the interpreter, Amadi Fatuma, and had received from him a brief story of the end of the expedition.

It seems that the *Joliba* sailed along the Niger as far as Kabara, in Timbuktu, contesting almost every mile of the way with hostile natives, who darted out from the banks in their swift canoes and shot arrows or hurled spears at the explorers. At one time they had sixty canoes speeding around them, and every moment were threatened with death or, what was worse, an imprisonment of lingering torture.

Fatuma himself left them at a place called Yauri, in Hausaland, where he landed with presents for the king who, however, immediately clapped him in chains, seized all his belongings, and sent off an army to catch the explorers when they came to the cataracts at Bussa.

All unsuspecting, Park and his companions sailed on down the river until they reached the troubled waters of Bussa, where great rocks in the river-bed constrict the stream into a narrow channel through which it dashes with great violence. The steep banks of the river were crowded with armed men, who waited until the boat was in the trough of the current, bumping its way between the rocks, before discharging volleys of arrows and spears at the harassed occupants.

Then the boat seems to have caught its nose between two rocks, and to have jammed there. Thicker and thicker grew the flights of arrows, until at last Martyn and Park, each seizing a soldier in his arms, for they were the only ones who could swim, sprang from the rapidly sinking boat and attempted to reach the shore.

But the current was too strong for them. Perhaps they had been wounded: perhaps they were shot while battling with the stream. No one will ever know how the end came at last, for they never emerged from the water alive.

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Two of the three negroes who had accompanied them were killed outright, the sole survivor of the expedition clung to the boat and was spared by his savage captors. He escaped some time afterwards, and returned to his home in Bambara. It was from him that the story of Mungo Park's last fight eventually reached Isaaco, and was told by him to Maxwell.

That is the story of Mungo Park's two journeys. In the last tragic voyage along the Niger he followed the river for a good thousand miles from Bamako to Bussa, and was within some seven hundred miles of the mouth. Many others tried to complete what he had failed to do, and trace the river from source to mouth, but it was not until 1830 that this last remaining stretch, from Bussa to what is now the Nigerian coast, was traversed.



## CHAPTER IV

### The First Voyage Round the World: Ferdinand Magellan

ONE day, in the year 1493, Pope Alexander VI called for a map of the world. A large chart showing the two hemispheres as they were then known was spread out on a table in his study, and then, taking a pencil and ruler, His Holiness divided the world into two parts. The Eastern half he gave to Portugal, the Western to Spain.

As Columbus had discovered America, and Vasco da Gama had rounded the Cape in Portuguese ships and found the sea route to India, it seemed a very equitable affair; for England had not yet entered upon a rivalry for command of the sea.

The only hitch in this arrangement was that no one knew exactly where the dividing line between East and West was! It was all very well for the Pope to draw a line three hundred leagues to the westward of Cape Verd and say—Portugal to the East, Spain to the West; but what about the other side of the globe? No one had been there, no one knew in the least what it was like, nor, for the matter of that, how to get there. Columbus had tried to reach India by sailing westward, but he had been brought up short by the enormous new continent which, for all anyone knew to the contrary, formed a huge and impassable barrier from Pole to Pole.

The other side of the world was as unknown a place to the map-makers of 1500 as the other side of the Moon is to the astronomers of to-day!

In 1510 Vasco Nuñez de Balboa explored the Isthmus

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of Darien and discovered the Pacific Ocean; yet he had not the faintest idea of its extent, nor would anyone have ventured to suggest that it washed from Pole to Pole and joined farthest east to farthest west. But the Spaniards of those days had boundless ambitions and boundless courage. Rumours of the glories of Peru had reached them, the new found sea was said to stretch as far south as that enchanted land of boundless treasure, and full four hundred years before the Panama Canal became a fact, the Spaniards projected cutting a channel through the isthmus to enable their gold-laden galleons to make a speedy voyage to Spain.

Ferdinand Magellan, or Fernão Magalhães, as the name appears in his native Portuguese, was a nobleman born with a love of the sea and high adventure. His imagination had been stirred to its depths when Vasco da Gama came back to Lisbon with stories of how he had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and reached the magic shores of India. A few years later Magellan sailed on the second Portuguese voyage to the East as a common sailor, and took part in the conquest of Malacca. Full of adventure were those seven years in the far East, and when Magellan returned to Portugal, after a stormy voyage round the Cape, he was convinced in his mind that there must be some easier route to India, probably round the new found land of America.

So he went to Dom Manuel, the King of Portugal, and told him of his schemes and plans. But with the same perversity that had ridiculed the idea of Columbus and sent him to Spain, so did Dom Manuel ignore Magellan and drive him, in his turn, to the Spanish Court.

The great Emperor Charles V was no mean-minded monarch. The Western world was his by virtue of the Pope's decision; if the East could be reached by that route—well, it would be a long way off for His Holiness to try and enforce that pencil-ruled line!



# Magellan Sails Round the World

And this is how it came about that, on 20th September, 1519, a fleet of five vessels set sail from San Lucar, bound for the East by way of the West, to find a way to the Moluccas and prove that they belonged to His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain. There was the *San Antonio* of 120 tons; the *Trinidad*, in which Magellan himself sailed, of 110 tons; the *Concepcion* of 90 tons; the *Victoria* of 85; and the *Santiago* of 75. These five vessels were manned by 265 men, from every country in Europe.

Not even the captains of his fleet were fully in Magellan's confidence, for his scheme seemed risky to the point of insanity. Not unnaturally, they asked for sailing orders, and wanted to know whither they and their ships were bound, and it was not without some friction that they agreed to obey his order, which was simple in the extreme—to follow the *Trinidad* where-soever she led them, the signal being a flag by day, and a lantern high in the poop by night.

The first part of the voyage passed uneventfully. They made their landfall in the New World at Cape St. Augustine, something over five weeks from the day they sailed from San Lucar. The natives welcomed them gladly and hurried down to the ships to trade, exchanging fresh food and fruit for what seemed almost nominal prices. A fish-hook was gladly taken for six fowls, and Señor Pigafetta, the historian of the expedition, received five fowls for a gaily-coloured card—the king of hearts—and even then the natives thought they were cheating him.

Replenishing their stores with such pleasant things, they pushed further south. On 13th December they reached Santa Lucia Bay and then drove on to the Rio de la Plata, the existence of which was already known. But so hazy were they of the geography beyond there that they confidently expected to find the passage to the western ocean up this wide-mouthed river.

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Further south they began to see strange things. creatures, at first thought to be geese, though their size and ungainliness were amazing. These were really penguins, and their flesh was found to be excellent eating. The seals, too, were larger than any man had ever seen before—"sea-wolves" they called them—and their meat, too, was good for food.

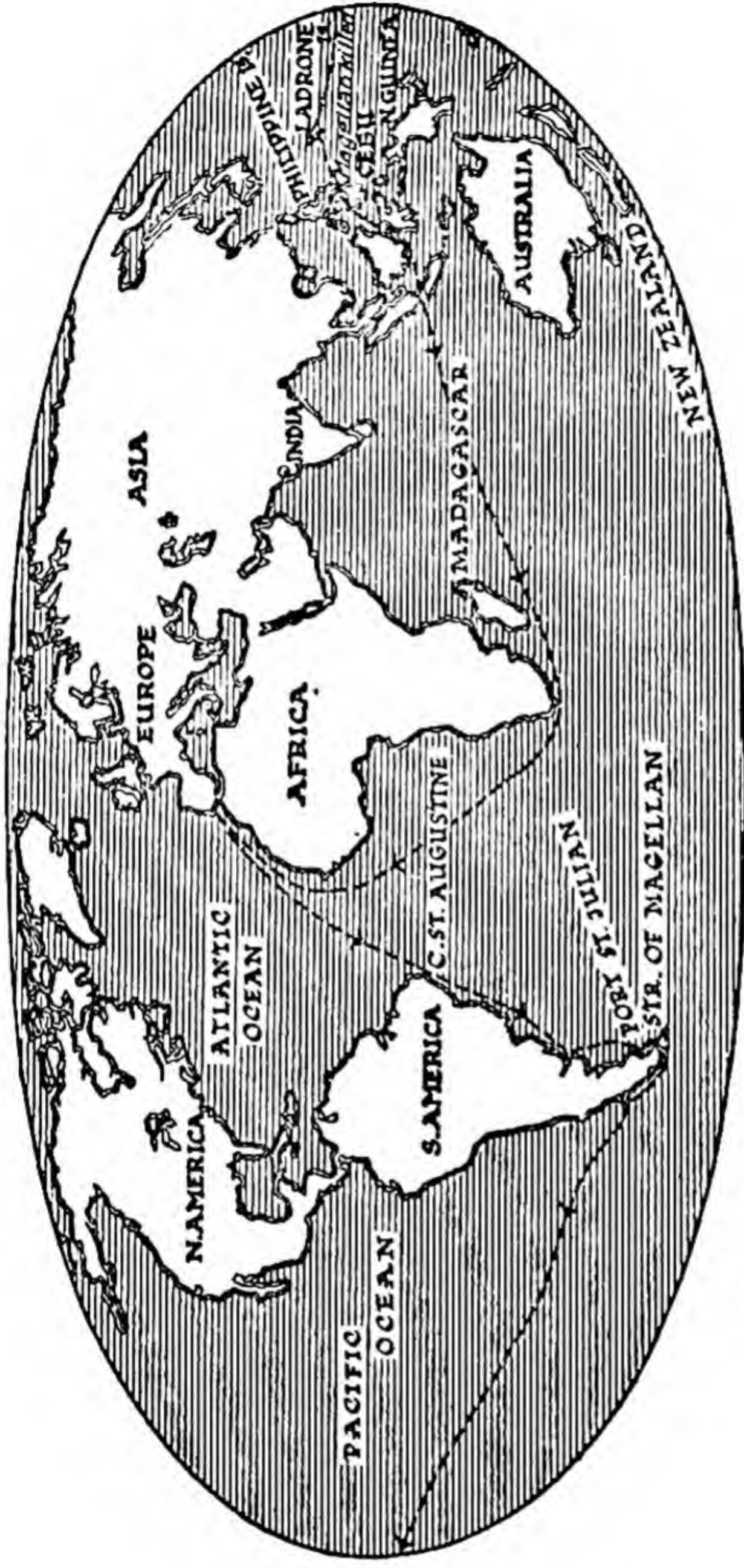
But as they made their way ever southward the prospect became more and more drear and forbidding: the rocky headlands were barren and treeless, the shore was treacherous, with unexpected shoals and cruel, jagged rocks like giant's fangs. As they got farther into unknown waters, the weather began to change, for it was March, and the southern winter was approaching.

It was not until they had reached  $49^{\circ}$  S., and had been battered about in such a gale as no man in the fleet had ever experienced before, that they made a harbour suitable for wintering in. Port St. Julian they called it, and there anchors were dropped on the 31st March, 1520.

Now arose a difficult situation for Magellan. Provisions were running low and courage was running even lower; for was it not evident that the expedition was a failure? South and ever south they had been sailing, yet never a sign was there of an opening to the westward. Was it not clear to any but a madman that this great barrier stretched down to the frozen *Terra Australis Incognita*, the Unknown Southern Land?

To such a pitch did discontent and fear of the unknown now work upon the men, that three of the ships, the *San Antonio*, *Victoria* and *Concepcion*, were encouraged by their captains to mutiny, and demand a return to Europe and better rations. Magellan took instant and stern measures: the captains were put in irons, tried and executed; and the men were threatened that unless they obeyed orders and accepted the Captain's discipline, they would be put ashore on that desolate coast and left to their fate.





Map of the World showing the course taken by Magellan.

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Meanwhile, winter had fallen with extreme rigour. Wind, rain, and snow, or a combination of all three in a terrible driving sleet, made life on deck a misery and fishing a torture. Five weary months they had of it, rarely going ashore, for the rocks and cliffs were bleak and barren.

It was some time, indeed, before they even saw any sign of inhabitants; but one day a gigantic man appeared on the beach, dancing and prancing like a clumsy goat, every now and again snatching up handfuls of earth and throwing them on his head. Magellan sent a man ashore with instructions to make friends with this strange creature by doing exactly as he did. So, leaping and dancing the two men approached one another, and after capering a while together, the sailor persuaded the giant to accompany him in a boat to where Magellan was waiting.

A very dreadful person was this native. His face was painted red, his eyes encircled with yellow rings, and two heart-shaped patches were daubed in white upon his cheeks. His scanty hair was likewise painted white. He was dressed in skins, and was of such an enormous size that those who approached him said they only reached to his waist. After receiving a few presents, which seemed to delight and astound him, he disappeared, and in a few days other giants appeared—Patagonians, or Big Feet, Magellan called them.

Two of them were taken aboard by force, but this caused such anger among their countrymen, who in revenge killed one of the crew with a poisoned arrow, that it became highly desirable to depart from St. Julian.

There was another reason for leaving. During the winter months Magellan had sent the *Santiago* to explore the coast further south, but she had met with disaster, having been driven ashore in a furious gale and knocked to pieces. Her shipwrecked crew, with



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the loss of only one man, were eventually rescued, and despite their own misadventure they reported that the coast was easily navigable, and that a harbour they had christened Santa Cruz was especially suitable for landing.

So the little fleet set sail from its winter quarters, though they left behind them on the coast of Patagonia, Juan de Cartagena and Pedro de la Reina, two responsible officers who had again attempted mutiny. They furnished these poor wretches with bread and wine and abandoned them there, to repent of their folly and wickedness.

On the 24th August the vessels left St. Julian and, though still dogged by foul weather, sailed on with their bows pointed ever southwards. They did not stay long in Santa Cruz, but followed the low, inhospitable shore-line, with its occasional rugged cliffs, its dangerous shoals, and its unbroken monotony.

The 21st October—Saint Ursula's Day it was marked in the calendars—was stormy and dark, like all the days on that distressful coast, but through the cloud and mist a Cape was sighted, which Magellan christened the Cape of Eleven Thousand Virgins, or, as it is now called, Cape Virgins. Beyond it opened a great stretch of water, surrounded by hills, as it appeared, yet so curiously shaped that amongst its many shoals and indentations it was clear there were openings, though whether to other bays could not be perceived.

The weather was rough, and little favourable for exploration; so Magellan sent the *San Antonio* and the *Concepcion* to seek out the head of the bay, while he stood by in the *Trinidad* and *Victoria* to await events.

For two weary, trying days the Captain waited in the bay, in almost hourly danger of being driven ashore and constantly tortured by anxiety as to what had happened to his two ships. And then, early in the morning, they were sighted, rounding a point in the bay some ten miles off, making all sail to rejoin their consorts.

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As they drew nearer they suddenly fired their guns and raised a shout that rang again and again through the chill morning air. They had found the passage that was to lead them westward! They had even sailed down it as far as they dared, before returning to tell their captain the great news.

Not a moment was to be lost. Magellan and his companions hoisted every rag of sail they could stand, and before nightfall the four vessels were far down the Strait past the second narrows.

Here occurred another of those curious and unexpected quarrels that so often accompany such voyages of discovery. Gomez, captain of the *San Antonio*, decided to return to Spain, for, as he asserted, their work was done when they discovered the passage, and both he and his men longed for home. But Magellan refused his consent to part company; so the *San Antonio* slipped off in the thick weather and they saw her no more. The *Victoria* even retraced her course to Cape Virgins in the hope of picking her up, and planted a banner, with a sealed message buried beneath it. But she saw no sign of the missing vessel. It was a serious loss, for the *San Antonio* was the largest ship in the fleet, and in her hold was the greater part of the food Magellan was reckoning on to feed the crews of his other three ships.

They cruised about, giving their consort a last chance to appear, and searching the clouds of sleet and rain for sight of her spars. At night they were often deceived into thinking she was near at hand, for the coast was dotted with strange, mysterious lights that flickered here and there, and made Magellan christen it *Tierra del Fuego*, the Land of Fire.

At last they had to give up hopes of the *San Antonio*, and Magellan decided to make sail and push through the Straits to the unknown that lay beyond. It was a dreadful voyage, for it is always winter in Magellan's



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Straits. Snow, hail, rain and wind mark every hour of every day of the year. Yet, with his clumsy square-rigged vessels, Magellan made the passage which has daunted many a mariner in many a better ship. Through narrow channels where the gale was ever beating them on a lee shore, between frowning capes round which the wind howled in fierce squalls, past cruel teeth of jagged rock that often lay hid but a foot or two beneath the surface, across whirlpools and curious shore currents, then along depths where no lead could plumb nor anchor hold—for more than five weeks did those three tiny vessels thread their way through the Straits, in hourly danger, with no charts to guide them, no sun to be seen through the rain-swollen clouds, no knowledge of what the next twist in that channel might reveal.

At last, on 28th November, they cleared Cape Deseada, at the western end of the Strait, and emerged on the mighty Southern Ocean. How far was it across? Where would they strike next? Would they reach the Spice Islands while they yet had food to keep them alive?

The answer to all these questions was hidden. "Keep a north-west course," said Magellan, "and trust God and St. Iago!"

For a time they followed the lie of the South American coast. Presently the snow-capped mountains of so many evil memories were left behind, the cloud-darkened skies cleared, the warm sun cheered their ice-shrivelled bodies, and the angry grey sea calmed down into a sheet of limpid blue. "Mar Pacifico," Peaceful or Pacific Ocean, they called it, where quiet and rest could be obtained after their cruel hardships in the Straits.

And now, with the coming of the welcome weather, all hearts looked forward to new scenes, and the memory of what they had gone through was put aside. But

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what brought life and happiness to the men from sunny Spain was death to those born and reared amid the cold and stress of Patagonia. One of the giants they had taken aboard at Port St. Julian had been carried off to Spain in the *San Antonio*, the other was now aboard the *Trinidad*; both succumbed to the heat as each of the vessels, though on such different courses, bore them further from their native wildernesses.

But however pleasant the weather and smooth the sea, these were not benefits upon which the men could live, and food was getting very short. The water-barrels were foul, and all they had to drink was a yellow and nauseous fluid. The biscuit was nothing but powder, full of worms and made filthy by the rats, which had eaten the best part of it. The men tried to eat ox-hides, stewed in sea-water; sawdust was a delicacy, and rats fetched half-a-crown apiece, though even then they were so thin that scarce a mouthful could be got from the fattest. Scurvy was not slow in making its appearance and carried off a round score of the crew.

Yet, through it all, Magellan's heart remained staunch. He felt more assured than ever that if only he could keep alive and have enough men to work his ships, they would certainly reach the goal at last, and would surely arrive in the farthest east across the ocean from the farthest west.

For three months and twenty days they sailed on, with never a sight of land except two wretched islets, uninhabited and waterless—the Unfortunate Isles, as Magellan called them. On 12th February the little fleet crossed the Line, and, beneath the blazing heat of the tropic sun, life became almost unbearable to the weakened crews, who even began to long for the cold and damp of Patagonia. Boots and every scrap of leather that could be cut away from armour and other accoutrements, was now being eaten with avidity;



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planks were sawn up, and men went raving mad for lack of water.

So things went on until Wednesday, the 6th March, when a few small islands were sighted on the starboard bow. As the ships drew closer in to the shore, natives shot out to meet them in swift canoes; naked black men, with white teeth that flashed gleaming smiles at the worn-out sailors, who had long since forgotten what laughter meant. Before long they were scrambling up the sides, their lithe bodies darting hither and thither, and their nimble fingers picking up everything that was not firmly secured. They were like a swarm of locusts, and had the captain not ordered his men to resist to the utmost, an hour's time would have found his vessels stripped of every movable object, from the ships' buckets to the very belaying pins.

Neither Magellan nor his crews were much in a mood to stand any nonsense, so when it came to their stealing the Captain's own skiff his patience evaporated. He took a landing-party of forty men, burned some fifty huts, demolished a few canoes, and having killed seven natives, recovered the boat.

A general hunt for provisions was then made in the deserted villages. Coco-nuts, bananas, and sugar-cane seemed to be the staple food, and nothing more substantial could be obtained. When they had got all they wanted the captain gave the order to get aboard again, and before long they were standing away into the sunset once more.

As they sailed from the island some of the natives ventured after them in canoes, but they did no worse than throw a few stones, after which they sped back to their islands again—Ladrones, or Robbers' Islands, Magellan called them, and the name has stuck to them to this day.

At daybreak, on the 16th March, a high hill appeared above the horizon, and as they stood in to the shore

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it was seen that they were approaching a large island which was evidently inhabited. Before they actually reached it, however, they put in at a little deserted islet, where tents for the sick were set up on shore, and a sow—presumably taken at the Ladrones—was slaughtered.

They were all resting after dinner, on the Monday, when a boat was seen approaching with nine men in it, who, as soon as they landed, exhibited every sign of friendliness. Five of them were gorgeously dressed and were evidently chieftains of some importance. Food was taken out of their canoe and presented to the Captain, who in return gave them mirrors, bells and such other things as were likely to cement good feeling. Then, after mutual expressions of friendship, the chieftains departed, indicating by signs, however, that in four days they would return with good supplies of rice and other victuals.

Magellan and his men spent eight days on the islet, while the sick grew strong again and all hands got a chance to stretch their limbs after the weary months afloat. On Monday, the 25th March, the bugles sounded for all aboard, and anchors were weighed.

During the next two days the vessels cruised between the islands that surrounded them, having picked up the presents which their visitors had sent them, according to their promise. On the Wednesday night lights were observed on one of the islands, and the vessels ran close to the shore with the early morning light.

Then occurred one of the most striking incidents of the whole voyage. Years ago, when he had sailed round the Cape to the Moluccas, Magellan had taken back with him a slave from Sumatra, whom he had christened Henry. This slave had accompanied the Captain on his present voyage and was now looking with interest on a canoe which was speeding out to them from the shore.



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Suddenly a thought seemed to strike him, and he shouted out to the men in the little boat a few words in his own Malay, which he had not spoken for those many years. To his delight his words were understood and answered.

Magellan, who was standing by, understood in a flash what this meant. With a shout of triumph he called his crew around him. They had done the impossible! They had sailed round the world! The islands they struck were what are now called the Philippines. They had found the islands of the East, after all, and that by sailing ever westward!

The Captain went ashore to meet the king, who soon afterwards returned the visit to the *Trinidad*, and the usual exchange of presents took place—food on the one hand, and coloured cloths and trinkets on the other. Magellan and the king even underwent the ceremony of *cassi-cassi*, or blood brotherhood.

Magellan now thought it as well to impress the people among whom he found himself. Through Henry of Sumatra he gave the king vivid accounts of the splendour of his Spanish Majesty, of his prowess in war, of the mighty armed men who could make his power felt even in distant lands. As evidence, he ordered one of his crew to don a complete suit of armour, and then told three others to attack him with swords and daggers. The king was impressed and observed that one such man was worth a hundred of his own unarmoured warriors. Yes, said Magellan, and gravely added that even in his vessels he had a good couple of hundred men in full armour!

To seal their friendship Magellan now sent ashore Pigafetta—who later wrote the story of this expedition—with another man to partake of the king's hospitality. There followed much eating of rice and pork, accompanied by deep draughts of a potent native wine. The king's method of drinking a health was rather alarming; before taking up the cup he would raise his clenched

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hands to the sky and afterwards towards the innocent Pigafetta; then, just as he was about to drink, he shook his left fist firmly within a couple of inches of his guest's eye, as though he had every intention of making it a black one. Rather dubiously, Pigafetta did the same by His Majesty, and all was well.

The king's palace was built on piles, and had to be reached by somewhat shaky ladders. After their very substantial meal, the two Spaniards were glad to retire into a room nearby, without having to clamber down to the ground. The following day there was more eating of rice, pork, and ginger, and so insistent was the king on their eating as long as there was anything left to be eaten, that neither of his guests was sorry when the time came to bid farewell and return to a more normal diet.

The next Sunday was Easter Day, and an imposing Mass was said at a little altar erected on the beach. The king and crowds of natives were present and expressed much interest and awe in what was being done, and even allowed a great cross to be erected on the summit of a hill. Soon afterwards Magellan told the king that he could stay at Mactan, as his island was called, no longer. So they bade an affectionate farewell and set sail, arriving at the island of Cebu on the 7th April.

Cebu, or Subu, was much larger than the island they had just left, and the king, to whom the interpreter was sent at once, was a man of some state. He demanded to know who his visitors were, then graciously expressed his command that they should wait until the following day before he could give his answer as to their permission to land. In the meantime he treated Henry, the interpreter, to a sumptuous banquet and did his best to find out all about the strangers.

On the following day the king announced that he was ready to trade with the visitors and learn their



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wisdom, for the King of Mactan had arrived by this time, and told his brother monarch of all the wonderful things he had seen—the man in armour and other marvels. Then followed a formal declaration of blood-relationship between Magellan and his host, after which the king sent his brother aboard the *Trinidad* to get a view of some of these marvels for himself.

Return visits were paid, great feasting went on for some days, and at the end of it all the King of Cebu announced his intention of becoming a Christian. Accordingly a very imposing ceremony took place, when the king, his queen and some eight hundred persons were baptized and re-named, the king taking the name of Charles, in honour of his Catholic Majesty of Spain, whilst his queen was called Juanna.

Meanwhile, men and women came crowding in from every corner of the island, until the good fathers of the fleet had christened many thousand souls. Idols were destroyed and altars pulled down, native priests chased from their temples, and the temples themselves levelled with the ground. The king was given a magnificent red upholstered chair and a suit of armour. All looked well for Magellan's triumphant farewell and journey to the Moluccas.

It was at this juncture that, on 26th April, a man named Zula arrived from the neighbouring island of Mactan, with the news that Chilapulapu, a mighty chieftain, had openly defied the King of Spain, and threatened a dire vengeance against all Christians and especially such of his own nation who should dare to be christened. So the King of Mactan, who had returned home, sent to Magellan for help against this tyrant. He only asked for a single boatful of men, for he felt sure that with these and the warriors he could raise himself, he would easily conquer Chilapulapu and send him about his business.

Every officer in the fleet was against the enterprise.

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But Magellan felt that it was his duty to help these people who were being thus threatened on account of the religion he had brought them. If he did not crush this man, no sooner would the *Trinidad* have sailed than the tyrant would fall on all those who had been baptized and massacre them out of hand.

So, against the advice of his officers, Magellan set out that same night with sixty men in armour, accompanied by the Christian King of Cebu and some hundreds of native warriors. Mactan was reached about three o'clock in the morning, and Chilapulapu given the opportunity of retracting his threats and acknowledging the King of Spain and his religion. But he answered scornfully that he had spears as well as the strangers, and knew fully as well how to use them.

Morning came and the Spaniards landed from their boats, having to wade many yards through the water on account of the barrier reef that ran along the shore. Forty-nine armed men went up the beach, leaving the remainder to guard the boats. The army from Cebu stayed in their canoes, waiting to see how matters went with the wonderful armed warriors from the sea!

The islanders, to the number of some fifteen hundred, were drawn up in three companies, and no sooner was the little body of Spaniards landed than they descended upon them with fierce shouts and waving spears. The trained soldiers discharged flights of cross-bolts and fired their muskets into the oncoming mob, but they drew too soon, and the missiles had little effect.

In vain did Magellan shout to his men to hold their fire, a sort of panic overtook them and they went on wasting ammunition. Some of the native huts were set alight, and this only increased their fury, so that at last they made a determined dash on the invaders, who began to retreat to the water's edge.

Fighting desperately the Spaniards retired towards their boats, their faces to the enemy, and as they realized



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their victory the men of Mactan waxed all the more ferocious. Twice did Magellan have his helmet knocked off, and twice he forced back his assailant with his sword. At last someone gave him a terrific blow with a scimitar, which brought him to the ground. In another moment a horde of shrieking foes had leaped upon him and were plunging their spears and daggers in his breast.

And this was the end of Ferdinand Magellan, the first man ever to sail round the world; and thus was he slain on Saturday, 27th April, 1521.

His trusted lieutenants Barbosa and Serrano were chosen to succeed him and take the vessels home. In point of numbers the loss in the battle had been small—only eight men; but the death of Magellan was a loss beyond all assessment.

Henry of Sumatra, the slave who had followed him for so many years and over so many miles, now proved his nature, for going secretly to the King of Cebu, he told him that now Magellan was dead there was nothing to fear; he might give up the foolish religion he had so enthusiastically adopted. To make sure that his treachery should never reach the ears of the King of Spain, and at the same time get a prize worth the having, he had only to seize the ships and see that neither they nor any of their crews ever left his shores.

This advice seemed indeed good to the King. He invited the two new captains and twenty-seven other men to come ashore and partake of a feast. All unsuspecting they went, and while sitting at meat they were massacred, every one of them save Serrano and the interpreter. The uproar was heard in the ships, where those in command hastily had the anchor weighed and poured a couple of broadsides into the shore.

Just as that moment Serrano was seen on the beach in his shirt, wounded and bound, in the hands of the natives. He entreated them not to fire any more, or he would then be massacred. Someone shouted across,

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asking what had become of the others, and where the interpreter was. He replied that all save Henry had been killed. He entreated them to ransom him. Particularly did he appeal to his special friend Carvalho, who had taken command. But Carvalho was a man of little feeling. He had saved his own skin, and had no notion of risking it again, so he shrugged his shoulders with a gesture of helplessness, and after another broadside or two, the ships passed out of range, and ere long Cebu with its tragedies was sinking beneath the horizon.

The one idea possessing all that remained of the company of explorers was to reach home. To make things easier they landed on a small island, where the *Concepcion* was burned and her men and goods transferred to the other two vessels. They set sail, reached Borneo, and went on by Palawan, where they lived some while ashore and Carvalho was deposed. Then they struck Tidore, off the coast of Gilolo, in the Moluccas.

Here they received a great treasure of cloves and spices. But the boats were unseaworthy by this time, and the men too few and weak to work them. After some rough weather, in which the *Trinidad* sprung a leak that taxed all their strength to keep under, the vessels parted, the *Victoria* to make her way to Spain, the *Trinidad* to limp into the nearest island, refit, and then struggle back to Panama. And so, on the 21st December, the two vessels that remained out of the fleet of five separated for ever.

Leaking and weatherworn, the *Victoria* crawled slowly round the Cape and up to the Cape Verd Islands. She was loaded to the brim with spices, worth in themselves a fortune; and El Cano, who now commanded her, cautioned his men against telling the covetous and enemy Portuguese on shore who they were. But one of the crew let the secret out, and the harbour authorities at once got ready their vessels to sweep out



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and capture this wealthy but unarmed trader. But El Cano did not wait. Abandoning those of his men who were on shore he clapped on sail and fled, nor did he stop until, on Monday, the 8th September, 1522, he tied the *Victoria* up against the quay of Seville.

They had been three years away. Of the 265 men who had set sail, only 18 now walked ashore across the gangway. The thirteen left at Cape Verd eventually reached home, and after many years, four men of the *Trinidad* saw their native land again. But that was all. The *Trinidad* never left Gilolo, and her beams may be rotting there to this day.

That was the end of the first voyage round the world; and he who planned it, and by his dauntless courage carried it through, never came back to the wife who was waiting for him, or to the King who would have honoured him, but lay unburied on the shores of a Pacific Island.

## CHAPTER V

### The Discovery of the Mississippi ; Joliet and La Salle

**I**T was during the days of Frontenac, the famous Sun Hawk of Louis XIV, the Sun King of France, that the boundless lands of Western America were discovered, and particularly the mighty river, the Mother of Waters, that with its affluents and tributaries drains the greater part of the North American Continents. It is true that the Spaniards actually found the Mississippi. De Soto was buried beneath its waters, and down its muddy stream his followers fled from their fancied El Dorado. But the Spaniards forgot their discovery, and nearly a hundred years elapsed before another white man gazed on its turbid flood.

When Frontenac arrived in Canada the whole of the interior of North America remained to be discovered and captured by whoso dared. The policy of France was to confine the English settlers to their few colonies clinging to the Atlantic coast, and to secure for King Louis the vast interior, as well as a port on the Gulf of Mexico, whence the power of Spain could be held in check. For France and Spain were at that time the two great powers of the world.

So the French governors of King Louis's Western dominions decided to explore the depths of the forests that lay beyond the great lakes and mountains. They employed fur traders, missionaries, and brave men like La Salle and Joliet to do it for them.

Louis Joliet was just the sort of man any government wants when there is pioneer work to be done.



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Though French by birth he was Canadian born, and from his earliest boyhood had been accustomed to adventures in lake and forest, fighting Redskins, bears and wolves. When he was old enough he turned fur trader.

A journey to Lake Superior, at that time a long and dangerous affair owing to the hostility of the Indians, had proved Joliet's suitability for a great task, so the governor sent him to find the Mississippi. As a companion he was given Father Jacques Marquette, a pious Jesuit who had mastered many Indian languages and was experienced in their ways of thought and life.

They started their adventurous journey on 17th May, 1673, leaving Machilimackinac—where Marquette had his mission—in two birch canoes, and accompanied by five men. They carried a supply of smoked meat and Indian corn. Their course lay to the westward, and plying their paddles they passed the Straits of Machilimackinac and coasted the northern shores of Lake Michigan, drawing up their canoes upon the strand at evening, while they built a camp-fire at the edge of the forest.

The party soon reached the River Menomonie and ascended it to the village of the Indians of that name. Here they were received hospitably enough, but were told the most alarming stories of ferocious tribes that infested the Mississippi, who were said to put every stranger to death, tomahawking all new-comers without cause or provocation. There was a dread demon, too, in that part of the river, a demon with a voice that could be heard from a vast distance, and who would surely swallow them up in the huge abyss in which he dwelt!

Not the worst horrors depicted by the medicine man could put Joliet and his companion off their journey, however. Thanking the Menomonies, they bid them farewell the next day and in due course

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reached the head of Green Bay, entered Fox River and dragged their canoes up the long and difficult rapids. Then they crossed Lake Winnebago and followed the windings of the river beyond, where it wandered across the rolling miles of prairie, dotted with groves of trees and browsing elk and deer.

On the 7th June they reached the land of the Mascoutin and Miami Indians, who had recently been joined by the Kickapoos. There Marquette had the gratification of seeing a large cross, left by other Jesuit missionaries, decorated with deerskins, red girdles, and bows and arrows, all of which had been placed there in homage to the Great Manitou of the French.

A council was now held. Joliet explained to the braves what he wished to do, and they readily assented to give him guides to take him and his party to the waters of the Wisconsin. All was arranged satisfactorily, and three days later the Frenchmen embarked again with two Indians to guide them. All the Indians from the neighbouring lodges came down to see them start—Miamis, with long locks of hair dangling over each ear, sturdy Mascoutins, and Kickapoos, who marvelled at the Palefaces setting out on so long and seemingly foolish an adventure.

The river twisted among lakes and marshes, through which their Indian guides found the way with unerring skill. Then they came to a portage, where they had to carry the canoes a mile and a half over the prairie and through marsh.

At last they saw another river ahead of them, and with a thrill realized that they had bid farewell to the waters that emptied into the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic, and were about to push their canoes out into a stream that would bear them they knew not whither—perhaps into the Pacific Ocean, near California; perhaps into the Gulf of Mexico.

So they thrust their birch-bark canoes into the placid





Map showing the tracks of the explorers of the Mississippi. Joliet's route is indicated by the heavy dotted line; the lighter line shows La Salle's.

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waters of the Wisconsin, and glided down past islands choked with entangling grape-vines, by forests, groves and prairies, under enormous trees, or at the foot of woody bluffs. By night they bivouacked on the shore, the canoes inverted on the bank, the fire flickering in the darkness; a meal of roast bison flesh or venison, and then the subtle calm of the evening pipe. When they started again in the early morning the mist hung over the river, only to melt as the sun grew high in the heavens, till the glassy water of the river and the languid woods basked breathless in the sultry glare.

A week later, on the 17th June, their quiet stream suddenly swept round the foot of a lofty tree-clad hill into the broad and rapid current of a great river. With a shout of joy Joliet and Marquette drove their paddles into the water. It was what they had been seeking and hoping for; it could be none other than the mighty river of which they had heard so much—the Mississippi!

And now, as they paddled with the stream, the country changed into vast expanses of prairie dotted with bison. Great old bulls, standing sullenly by the water's edge, gazed at them stupidly through their tangled manes as the little boats swept by. Of man there was no sign, and for more than a week they hurried downstream without seeing a vestige of human life. At last, on the 25th, they perceived footprints on the mud of the western bank, leading to a well-trodden path that went up to the prairie.

Landing from their canoes the adventurers followed this track across the open land, and then through a silent forest until they found an Indian village. All was now caution. With beating hearts they crept nearer and nearer, so close, indeed, that they could hear the voices of the unsuspecting Indians among the wigwams. Then they stepped boldly into the open, and shouted to attract attention.

Instantly there was the greatest commotion in the



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village. The seven Frenchmen stood still, wondering whether it portended peace or war. At last four braves advanced towards them, holding up a couple of peace pipes, decorated with feathers. They proved to be Illinois Indians and disposed to be friendly; so they all squatted down and smoked the pipe of peace, then solemnly made their way to the village. Here the chief received his visitors with the utmost ceremony, standing stark naked at the door of his large wigwam and shading his eyes with both hands. "Palefaces," he said, "how bright the sun shines when you come to visit us! All our village awaits you! You shall enter our wigwams in peace!"

With these words he led the way into his own wigwam which was crowded to suffocation with men, who all sat staring at the new-comers in unbroken silence. Having smoked with the elders, they were then taken to see the great chief of all the Illinois, who lived at a neighbouring village. There they smoked more pipes of peace, and listened to a speech of welcome from the great chief, who delivered it standing between two old men, naked as himself. His lodge was crowded with braves whom Marquette addressed in Algonquin, telling them the glories of King Louis of France, and of the great Frontenac, who reigned in Montreal and looked upon all the Red Men as his children.

The chief replied by assuring his guests that their presence added flavour to his tobacco, made the river more calm, the sky more serene and the earth more beautiful. Reverting to practical matters, he then pressed them to partake of a feast that had been prepared in their honour.

First, a large wooden bowl of porridge made from Indian meal, boiled with grease, was placed before them, and the chief fed them himself, as though they were children, with a large wooden spoon. Then followed a plate of fish, which the master of the feast blew upon

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to cool, and having removed the bones, placed each morsel with his fingers in the guest's mouth.

A large dog, killed and cooked for the occasion, was then produced, but somehow the visitors were not tempted by its deliciousness, so they wound up the feast with a large dish of buffalo meat, after which the crowd, who had watched them all this time in unbroken silence, retired. Joliet and Marquette spent the night on buffalo robes spread on the ground, and the next morning, escorted by the chief and six hundred braves, returned to their canoes and departed.

Again they were on the way, drifting slowly down the great Mississippi. They passed the mouth of the Illinois, and a few miles farther were quietly coasting along when they were suddenly aroused by danger. A torrent of yellow mud rushed furiously athwart the calm blue current, boiling and surging, and sweeping in its course logs, branches and uprooted trees. They had reached the mouth of the Missouri, where that savage river, descending from its mad career through vast unbroken territories, poured its turbid flood into the clear waters of the Mississippi.

The light birch canoes whirled on the miry waves like leaves before a storm, but they weathered its dangers, passed the unbroken silence of the forest where now stands the great city of St. Louis, and a few days later saw on their left the mouth of the stream to which the Iroquois had given the name of Ohio—Beautiful River.

Soon after this the scenery began to change and the marshy shores were hidden in a dense growth of cane, with tall straight stems and feathery, light-green foliage. The sun glowed down upon them through the hazy air with a stifling heat, and day and night their ears were almost stunned by the constant pinging of myriads of mosquitoes. They floated slowly down the current, crouched in the shade of sails which they had spread as awnings.



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Suddenly one of the men gave the alarm. Indians were on the bank, gazing at them so motionless that it was difficult to realize they were alive, and in a silence that might mean peace—or war. Marquette held aloft the pipe of peace which the Illinois Indians had given them for just such an encounter, and the Red Men beckoned them to approach and land. They did this, with some secret doubts, but met with a good reception, being treated to a feast of buffalo meat, cooked in bears' oil, and white plums. When Joliet eagerly asked how far the great river went, he was airily told that in ten days they would reach the sea. Had they but known it, they were more than a thousand miles from salt water!

After due civilities they re-entered the canoes and pushed out into the river, to float again through an interminable monotony of river, marsh and forest. Day after day passed in solitude; and they had paddled over three hundred miles further before, just as they approached the mouth of the Arkansas River, they saw a cluster of wigwams on the western bank.

Hitherto they had met with nothing but friendliness from the Red Men, but now the air was rent with war-whoops, and the voyagers saw braves rushing down to the shore, brandishing tomahawks and leaping high in a mad war-dance. In a few minutes they were cut off, above and below, by large canoes filled with Indians, while a swarm of warriors waded headlong into the water to attack them. Luckily the stream of the river befriended the travellers and swept them out beyond reach of these stalwarts, though a flight of arrows and tomahawks was launched at them, luckily without doing damage.

All this time Marquette, with great bravery, had been standing in his canoe, holding aloft the peace-pipe as a token of friendliness. At last some of the older warriors persuaded the hotheads to cease hostili-

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ties, and with considerable trepidation the Frenchmen paddled their canoes to land and went into the village. There they were feasted on sagamite (a kind of meal) and fish, and persuaded to spend the night in the Indian lodges, though what between fleas and fear, none of them slept very soundly.

Early in the morning they pushed off, but soon stopped at another village of the Arkansas Indians, where they were received with the utmost kindness. The warriors were waiting for them, sitting in silent immobility on mats, entirely naked save for strings of beads in their noses and ears. The usual feast was immediately partaken of, corn roasted whole, roast dog and other dainties. As they were banqueting Joliet asked about the river, but he could only get the vaguest hints concerning what he wished to know; all they could do was to warn him more strongly against pushing further south, where the Indians were so ferocious that even their neighbours feared to traffic with them.

Joliet, Marquette, and their companions now held a council-of-war at which they reluctantly decided that the time had come for them to return. They had followed the Mississippi for many hundreds of miles, and had found that it flowed neither east nor west—neither to the Atlantic nor to the Pacific—but south to the great Gulf of Mexico; and they feared that if they ventured further south among the hostile Indians of which they had heard such terrifying stories, they might be seized and put to death, when the record of their discoveries would be for ever lost.

So they put about and began the wearisome toil of paddling against the current which had brought them so easily downwards. Marquette was taken ill; they had many hardships and disappointments, and the return journey was only heartened by the thought of all they would have to tell when they reached Canada. It was the end of September before they put in to



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Green Bay again, having been away four months, during which they paddled more than two thousand five hundred miles.

Joliet immediately set off to Quebec to tell Frontenac of his wonderful discoveries. He took his Journals with him, and various maps, but just above the rapids at La Chine the canoe was upset, two of his men and one Indian boy were drowned, all his papers were lost and he himself narrowly escaped with his life. And all this was in sight of the French Settlements, though he had travelled in safety hundreds of miles where there would not have been a soul to help him!

The great-minded Frontenac believed what the heart-broken explorer told of the great river he had sailed so far along, although he had nothing to prove his story, and it was resolved that another expedition should be sent to follow the mighty river to its mouth.

Seven years elapsed before the new plan to trace the Mississippi was carried out. During those seven years much intriguing took place, and several false starts were made, for there were various interests to be considered in the undertaking. At last René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, was chosen by Government to explore the Mississippi.

La Salle had many enemies, but the plots and counter-plots that took place to thwart his success do not concern us here, so we will skip them all and pick up La Salle as he started out from Fort Miami, on the borders of Lake Michigan, at the end of December, 1681. The party consisted of twenty-three Frenchmen and eighteen Mohican Indians with their squaws, and they set out dragging the goods and canoes on sledges down the Chicago River, and across the land to the frozen Illinois, where they did not reach open water until they had traversed Lake Peoria.

Floating easily down between the leafless forests that flanked the tranquil stream, on 6th February they

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emerged on to the broad waters of the Mississippi, many miles further down from the point where Joliet and Marquette had first encountered the river. Here their progress was stopped by huge blocks of floating ice. So they halted a week, to collect some of their Indians who had lagged behind.

The mouth of the Missouri was passed, with its mud and debris; they saw a deserted town of the Tamaroas and three days later they reached the mouth of the Ohio. Tempting as that beautiful river looked, there was no time to explore it so they kept well out in the stream and were borne onwards.

On the 24th February they drew in to land near the Third Chickasaw Bluffs. Here the hunters went out for game, and all returned with full bags except Pierre Prudhomme. As Indian trails had been seen, La Salle feared that this man was lost. While some of his followers built a small stockade fort on a high bluff by the river, others ranged the woods in pursuit of the missing hunter. At last Prudhomme was found, half-dead. He had lost his way and had given himself up for lost. The little fort was named Prudhomme in his honour, and he and a few others were left in charge of it while the main party pushed south.

With every mile they paddled down the great river, now far beyond where any white man had ever been, they seemed to be striking a new life. Spring was coming apace, the warm sunlight, the drowsy air, the tender new foliage, the wealth of new flowers all added courage to their hearts. Cheerful and full of hope they followed the windings of the great river on its tortuous course through wastes of swamp and cane-break.

On the 13th March, as they were silently paddling along, enveloped in a dense white mist that completely hid both shores, they suddenly heard booming through the fog the "tom-tom-tom" of an Indian drum, suc-



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ceeded, a moment later, by the fiendish yell of a war-whoop. La Salle at once crossed to the opposite shore and hastily erected a fort of felled trees—so hastily, indeed, that when the fog lifted an hour later, the Indians on the farther bank found, to their amazement, the Palefaces already under cover.

Some of the French advanced to the edge of the water and made signs of peace, exhibiting the calumet and making every overture that they could think of. At first the Redskins, who were still stamping to and fro in the war-dance, were too excited to pay attention, but at last a few braves came over, and, much to La Salle's surprise and relief, friendly relations were soon established. The Frenchmen then crossed the river in their turn and visited the Indians.

On landing they found themselves at a town of the Kappa band of Arkansas Indians. They were well received, and the braves were so honourable that they stole not a pin nor showed any of the somewhat blood-thirsty curiosity so often met with among the primitive Red Men.

After touching at several other towns of this people, the travellers proceeded on their way, guided by two Indians. About three hundred miles below the Arkansas river they stopped at a swamp where their guides told them to land, as they must go to the great city of the Taensas. Two members of the party went, named Tonty and Membre.

They shouldered their birch canoe through the swamp, and launched it on a lake which, in a couple of hours, brought them to a town so large that they could hardly believe their eyes. The houses were large and square, built of sun-baked mud mixed with straw, arched over with dome-shaped roofs of cane, and regularly placed round a sort of central square. Two of them were larger and better than the rest. One was the chieftain's lodge; the other the Temple of the Sun.

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They entered the former and found a single room, 40 ft. square, where in the dim light—for there was no opening but the doorway—the chief awaited them on a sort of bench, three of his wives by his side; while sixty old men, wrapped in white cloaks woven of mulberry bark, formed his council. When he spoke his wives howled to do him honour, and to every word his councillors listened with the reverence due to a potentate for whom, at his death, a hundred victims would be sacrificed.

This great chief condescended to visit La Salle at his camp, where he appeared, clothed in a white robe and preceded by men carrying white fans and a disc of burnished copper, to represent his father the Sun. He was very gracious, notwithstanding, and greeted La Salle almost as an equal.

Other villages were passed, with their chieftains, such as the chief of the Natchez, who also claimed kinship with the Sun. On the 6th April the river divided itself into three broad channels. La Salle followed the western, Tonty took the middle passage, and a third man, Dautray, sailed down the easternmost.

As La Salle drifted down the turbid current, between low shores, the brackish water changed to brine, and the breeze grew fresh with the salt of the sea. At last the broad expanse of the great Gulf opened on his sight, lonely and deserted, with never a sign of life or token that human foot had trodden its shores.

La Salle hugged the marshy coast until he met his companions, who came down the other arms of the delta. Then they all assembled on a patch of dry ground a short distance from the mouth of the river, and erected a column bearing the arms of France and inscribed with the words, "Louis le Grand, Roy de France et de Navarre, regné; le neuvième Avril, 1682." The French presented arms, the New England Indians and their squaws looked on in stolid indifference, while La Salle



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proclaimed Louis of France as sovereign of the new found land which, in his honour, he named—Louisiana.

Shouts of “Vive le Roi!” and volleys of musketry responded to his words; a cross was planted beside the column, and a leaden plate buried beneath it bearing the arms of France and the Latin inscription: “*Ludovicus Magnus regnat!*”

This was the manner in which an intrepid Frenchman penetrated a wild and dangerous country which is now, less than two and a half centuries later, the heart of the wealthiest and most flourishing land in the world.

## CHAPTER VI

### The Lure of the North-West Passage; Frobisher, Davis, Hudson and Franklin

**I**NDIA was the great lure—India and Cathay—that led so many gallant men on great quests, and indirectly caused the discovery of vast continents. It was to find India that Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic—and found America; it was to find a sea way to India that Vasco da Gama and Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope and laid the foundations of South Africa; and it was still to find a sea route to India by the North-West, over the top of America, as it were, that innumerable mariners ventured into the Arctic ice, not all of them to come back again.

Sir Martin Frobisher was the first of this gallant band. The geographers of his time asserted that America was an island, and proved, moreover, by irrefutable mathematics that a passage along its northern shores to Cathay would be quicker and easier than a similar passage to the east, along the northern coasts of Russia. As nothing was known of either of those quarters of the globe it was as easy to assert the one as the other. The North-West theory was as good as the North-East theory. Frobisher decided to find out something more.

On the 17th June, 1576, two tiny vessels anchored off Greenwich Palace, where Queen Elizabeth was in residence. They were the *Michael*, 25 tons, and the *Gabriel*, 20 tons, and at the end of a painter was a 7-ton pinnace, that should be of use in finding the way through the ice. As the tiny squadron fired a salute Queen Bess stood at a window and waved her hand;



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and with this royal blessing on their plans they hoisted the anchor, dropped down river, and next day bade farewell to Harwich and England.

The 26th of the month found them passing the Shetland Islands in the throes of a gale that tossed them about without mercy and sent to the bottom their pin-nace, with four men aboard. Discouraged by this mis-adventure and having lost all taste for a voyage that had started so inauspiciously, Owen Gryffyn, the Welsh captain of the *Michael*, basely deserted, leaving the *Gabriel* with her crew of eighteen—officers, gentlemen, mariners and boys, to pursue the journey into the silent north alone. Gryffyn made his way back to England and covered over his own cowardice by reporting that Frobisher and his men had all been lost.

Some days afterwards the coast of Greenland was sighted, a whitish line on the far horizon. But Frobisher kept to his westerly course, though he was sadly troubled by the dense fog that enveloped them, through which huge icebergs occasionally loomed—dread dangers which the little craft was almost too small to fear.

Then a gale arose and lashed the sea into frenzy. So suddenly did it come, and so furiously, that the *Gabriel* was thrown on her beam ends before there was any chance of shortening sail; the water poured in at her open waist, for this cockleshell that dared to brave the Arctic was not even decked the whole length of her! Practically water-logged, there was no getting the boat under control until Frobisher, thrusting aside his terror-stricken men, seized an axe, cut off the foretack and hewed down the mizzen mast. Thus relieved the ship began to right, and, like a dog, shook herself free of some of the water that had swamped every corner of her body.

High land was seen on 29th July, and Frobisher named it Queen Elizabeth's Foreland. He wanted to

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land, but the weather was too forbidding, and ice was floating by in such masses that he dared not try the experiment. Indeed, as he was debating whether to risk it or no, a great berg that was drifting by suddenly split from top to bottom with a deafening crash and fell asunder with a flurry that nearly sank the little craft.

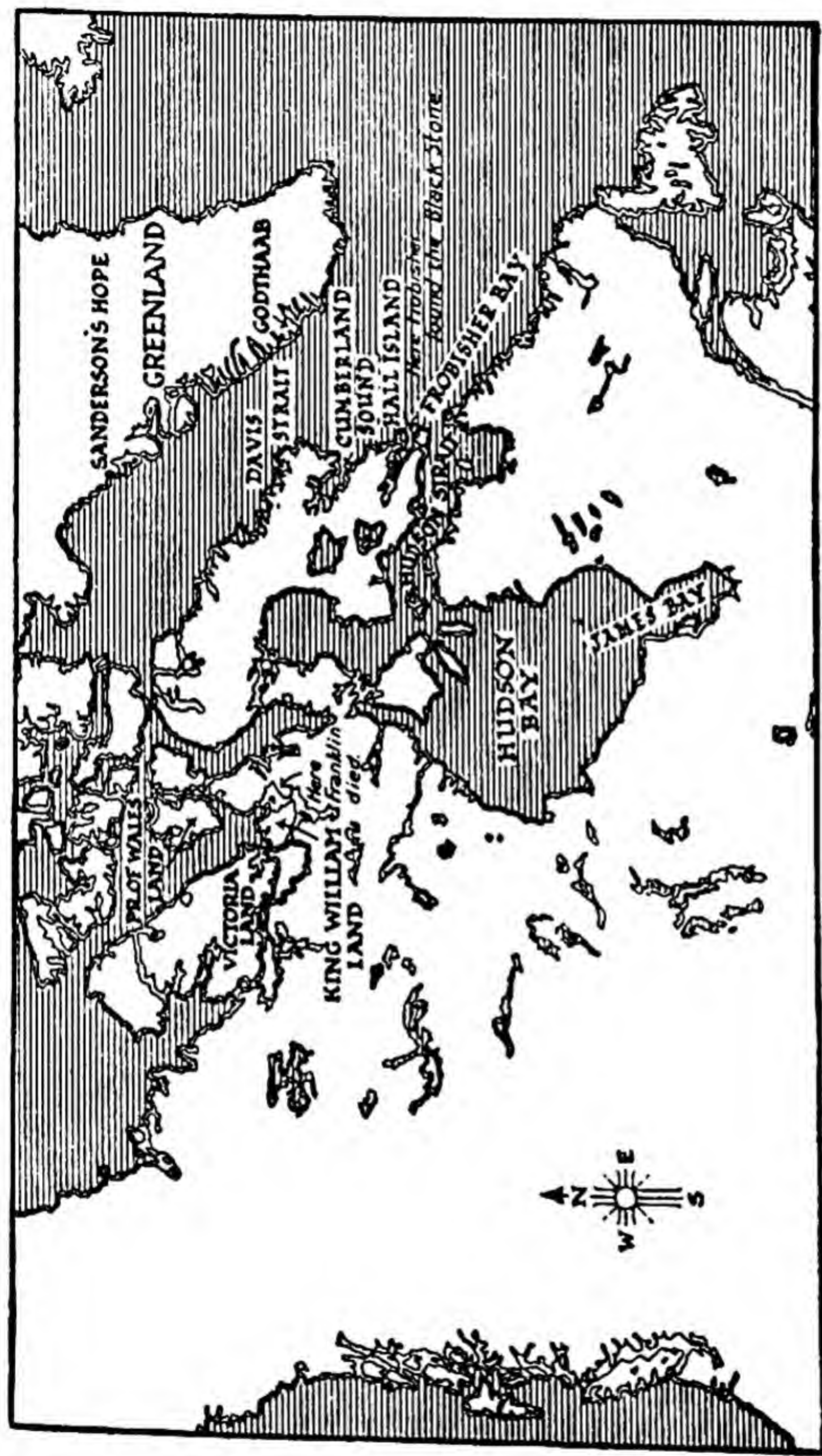
Landing was at last made on a little island christened after the master of the *Gabriel*, Christopher Hall, and on Hall Island they picked up a mysterious piece of black stone that was to have much to do with Frobisher's subsequent adventures.

Having embarked again they sailed up a long channel stretching away to the north-west, which they named Frobisher's Strait; and there they encountered Eskimos, with whom they became friendly, and tried to barter pelts. But here a dreadful disaster occurred, for the ship's only boat, manned by five men, rowed away to traffic with the Eskimos, and in direct disobedience to their orders went round a bend in the water-lane to where some hummocks hid them from sight of the ship. What happened will never be known; neither men nor boat were ever seen again.

With his crew thus depleted, and deprived of his boat, Frobisher was forced to make the best of his way home. The *Gabriel* dropped anchor in the Thames on the 9th October, when Frobisher and his men were accorded a stirring welcome from friends who had thought them long since lost.

It was now that the curious black stone began to play its tragic part. A certain Michael Lock, at whose expense the expedition had been fitted out, conceived the notion that this black rock contained gold. The Assay Master at the Mint assured him it was only iron pyrites, and other assayers said the same. But an Italian charlatan asserted that it had "the makings of gold" in it, whatever that might mean. This was enough for Lock, who, on the strength of this senseless





Map of the North-West of America, showing the principal points reached by Frobisher, Davis, Hudson and Franklin.

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report, founded a gold-mining company called the Cathay Company. Queen Elizabeth herself took £1,000 of shares, and lent a ship—the *Aid*—to further its exploration.

On the 26th May, 1577, Martin Frobisher sailed once more for the North-West, not this time to discover a passage, but to find gold. His fleet consisted of the *Aid*, of 200 tons, the *Gabriel*, and the *Michael*. Towards the middle of July they reached the land where the famous black stone had been picked up.

Frobisher's orders were to load to the brim, and make his way back to England as quickly as he could. But like most true seamen and explorers, gold had little attraction for him, and now that he found himself with a well-equipped expedition on the scene of his previous unhappy adventure, he decided to do his utmost to recover the men who had been seized by the Eskimos. The natives would say nothing, though there was little need for them to open their mouths, for the clothes of the lost men were found in their tents, and it was clear that they had all been murdered. So, sad at heart, Frobisher got aboard his worthless cargo of "gold" and sailed back to England.

Even then the true nature of this wealth was not found out, for no sooner was he back at home than a scheme was started for founding a mining settlement in that desolate spot, and miners from Cornwall were actually engaged to go thither. A timber house was even packed in sections, and stored aboard the *Aid*, which, accompanied by no fewer than fourteen vessels, sailed from Dover on 31st May, 1578.

This time the voyage was made down the Channel, and thence across the Atlantic to Greenland, where Frobisher landed. They then pushed across to the land of false gold, though it was not reached without perils, for on one occasion a whale rose under the bows of one of the boats and nearly capsized her; and a gale carried off the topmasts of another ship.



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Frobisher's Strait was frozen when they arrived, and an attempt was made to cut through the flow. But while this was being done a gale sprang up from the sea, drove in the loose floating ice against the boats, packed some up tight and nipped others near to breaking. The *Dennis* was crushed against a berg and sank, her crew being barely saved by the men who were on the floe cutting the ice. At last the gale abated, the wind changed, and the loose ice was driven out to sea again.

Frobisher was now at liberty to look around him. Stretching to the Westward was a great channel of open water that might lead—who knew whither? Perhaps *that* was the passage to far Cathay, to the Indies, to wealth and adventure besides which the loading up with dull stones seemed foolishness!

Followed by a few of his fleet the admiral took advantage of a fair wind and sailed for about a week down this fair waterway—Hudson's Strait, as it is now called; but coming to no sign of its end, and remembering with some chagrin that his duty lay in picking up stones, he gave the signal to put about, and after some rough sailing rejoined his consorts and loaded up with the worthless cargo.

After many privations they got this stuff to England, only to find that during their absence the Cathay Company had realized the true nature of the treasure, had declared itself bankrupt, and ruined its shareholders. Frobisher lost all his own money in the general wreck and for a time dwelt in poverty. But in time the sea called him again, though never more did he push boat into the Arctic ice; for the Queen had other work to do, he sailed to the West Indies, kept the Channel clear of enemies and, as all the world knows, helped to defeat the great Armada when it threatened our English shores.

Just seven years after Martin Frobisher came back from his last voyage in Northern waters, a young

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sailor named John Davis, who had eagerly listened to all there was to be told about the North-West passage, sailed from Dartmouth in command of two boats, the *Sunshine* and the *Moonshine*, of 50 and 35 tons respectively. Davis and a relative named John Janes were in the *Sunshine*, with fifteen sailors, a boy, and four musicians, taken on purpose to beguile the natives and soften their savage tempers. They were loaded with salt-meat and fish, biscuit, dried peas, butter and cheese, and ale—all of which was to last them until they made their way to the other side of the world!

On the 7th June, 1585, they left England, and six weeks later sighted the coast of Greenland, the "Land of Desolation" as Davis called it, from "the irksome noise of the ice and the loathsome view of the shore."

There was little inducement to land, so they coasted round the southern point of Greenland and hugged the shore up the east and northward until they reached a fjord, where now stands Godthaab. Davis and Janes landed, and the services of the four musicians were called upon to charm the Eskimos who came to meet them. All went smoothly and the natives sold them some furs and five kayaks.

After a short stay they bid their new friends farewell and sailed westward to the opposite shore of what is now called Davis Strait. The coast was deserted. They cruised up and down it a while, discovering Cumberland Sound, but meeting nothing alive save a few bears, seals and innumerable birds. Taking as careful observations as his instruments would allow, Davis mapped the place out and, as provisions were falling short and the weather was none too favourable, decided to make for home and collect an expedition in which to return and push his explorations farther afield.

A second expedition, made in 1586, proved abortive, for pack ice and bad weather prevented any exploration; so Davis prepared for a third attempt to solve the riddle



## The North-West Passage

of the North in the following year. This time he had three vessels, the *Sunshine*, *Elizabeth*, and *Ellen*, and, weighing anchor from Dartmouth on the 19th May, within the month reached Gilbert Sound, or Godthaab.

The enormous quantities of fish caught on the previous expedition led Davis to think he might make this voyage a commercial venture by taking back a large cargo; so he now ordered the *Sunshine* and *Elizabeth* to cast their lines and occupy themselves with this rather tame drudgery, while he himself, in the little 20-ton pinnace *Ellen*, which leaked so badly that the pumps could scarcely keep her afloat, ventured northward on what must have been one of the rashest expeditions in history.

Bidding farewell to his consorts, he set sail on the 25th June, and slowly creeping up the barren coasts, which ever seemed to grow more unfriendly, reached the latitude of  $72^{\circ} 12' N$ . There a frowning cliff, that rose sheer from the water to 850 feet, seemed as though it were the gateway to some Arctic waterway. It was for such that Davis took it, naming it "Sanderson his Hope," after the man in London who had financed his expedition. Taking advantage of a strong northerly wind, he then sailed westward, full of exultation as league after league was passed with never a sign of land.

Then came a halt. The *Ellen* suddenly found herself pulled up by an ice floe, 8 ft. thick, barring the north like some giant's wall. Further advance was impossible, and they were lucky to escape being caught in the grip of the ice. So Davis turned southward, made the western shore of Davis Strait, where he was back in familiar waters, and lay-to for his consorts, the fishermen.

For nearly a month he plied off and on the coast, re-discovering Frobisher's Strait (though he did not know it), and glancing into Hudson's Strait. Then,

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having met with no sign of the others, he made his way back to England in the tiny pinnace, dropping anchor in Dartmouth on the 15th September, 1587. The *Sunrise* and *Elizabeth* also reached home safely, loaded to the gunwhales with fish.

John Davis's voyages were of the utmost importance. He discovered the western coast of Greenland and the Strait that bears his name, and he showed the way to Henry Hudson and William Baffin, whose names are written large on our maps. Of his after life there is no space to tell here; how, in the *Black Dog*, he helped drive the Don from England, how he sailed round the world with Cavendish, and at last was foully murdered by Japanese pirates at Malacca. He was one of England's greatest seamen.

Twenty years went by, and the London merchants were still as keen as ever to find the North-West passage—the short-cut to the East. One or two fresh discoveries had been made, but nothing really decisive had been done.

In 1610 a new expedition was decided upon by Sir Thomas Smith, one of the directors of the East India Company, and the command was given to Henry Hudson, who had just returned from the discovery of the river in New York State that will ever commemorate his journey. He was given the *Discovery*, a well-built vessel of 55 tons. With his son Jack, a boy of seventeen, and a crew of twenty-one men, he set sail from Greenhithe on the 22nd April.

All went well until they made the coast of Iceland, where one of the crew, a rascal named Green, quarrelled with Wilson the surgeon and struck him. Hudson, however, used his authority to patch matters up, and they proceeded on apparently good terms, for no incident worth mentioning occurred during the voyage past Greenland, through the Strait Davis had discovered,





THE LAST VOYAGE OF HENRY HUDSON  
*From the painting by John Collier in the Tate Gallery*





## The North-West Passage

and out into the vast extent of water now known as Hudson's Bay.

The winter had by this time begun to set in. They coasted down the east side of the bay and made winter quarters in the south-eastern corner of James' Bay. The ship was frozen in; the trees on the shore sufficed for abundance of fuel, and though food was none too plentiful they settled down to the long, black winter.

Months of silence and darkness, when the whole world seems frozen into stillness, are trying enough even in these days, when every man can read and argue and amuse himself. But imagine what that winter was like three hundred years ago. Not a man of the crew, except the captain, could read, even if there had been a book on board. With few ideas and only dull seamen's wits to express them, little wonder that as the time went on and food grew scarcer they fell to grumbling. The ring-leader was Juet, an old Arctic sailor, who had started as mate, but had been reduced for insubordination. He throve on his grievance. Green was, of course, ready to join in any mischief afloat, and several others helped to make up the mutinous gang.

On the 18th June, 1611, the ship drew clear of the winter's ice, and began her voyage to the north and homewards. The malcontents now numbered six, and by threats or persuasions they won over a majority of their fellows to at least a tacit agreement with the crime they had in mind. Exactly when this happened there is no telling, for they who had most to do with it liked to talk of it least in after days.

One morning, when Hudson climbed up the hatchway after his spell of rest, three men seized him from behind and pinioned him. The carpenter, Staffe, and several others ran to his assistance, but in their turn were caught by the mutineers and tied together. Young Jack Hudson was hauled from his berth, the sleep still in his eyes, and trussed up beside his father, and then the

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little open boat was hauled up alongside. Three sick men were first to be thrown into the boat. Staffe, Ladley and King, three loyal fellows, then fetched their chests and went into her, loudly declaring that they would rather die with honest men than live with cowards; then young Jack was thrown in, and lastly Henry Hudson.

The little shallop was cast off, with nine men aboard, one fowling piece, a pot, a little shot and powder and a handful of flour. With silent contempt they sat and gazed at the ship, all, that is, save one of the sick men, Michael Butt by name, who had been in the plot to send the captain and his men adrift, but at the last moment had been condemned to share their fate by the cook, who bore some private grudge against him. Butt kicked and fought frantically to save his miserable skin, but he was appealing to the wrong men for mercy.

The ship stood off a short distance and hove to, while the mutineers entered into their new domain and rifled the captain's chest and personal belongings. At first those in the boat imagined that they were to be given a last chance, and strained at the oars until they drew alongside. But before they could get aboard the mutineers thrust them off, braced the yards to the wind and soon had left them far behind. And no man ever heard more of Henry Hudson, his son Jack, or the loyal men who waited in the boat for the coming of death.

Of the thirteen who thus deserted them, five were ring-leaders in this villainy. On the 29th July the *Discovery* called in near the mouth of Hudson's Strait, and these five ruffians went ashore to traffic with the Eskimo, who had hitherto been always friendly. Suddenly, without any cause or warning, the natives attacked the sailors, killed Green outright and wounded the other four so severely that within the week all were dead. So was Henry Hudson revenged.

And now we must jump two hundred years and more for the conclusion of the search for the North-



## The North-West Passage

West Passage. Not that the idea had ever been forgotten, nor that there were no other attempts; but none had been successful, and there is little to tell of them.

It was in 1844 that the British Admiralty decided to send another expedition to find the elusive passage, and Sir John Franklin, a man of sixty, was appointed to the command. Two strong vessels, the *Erebus* and the *Terror*, were commissioned for the voyage, and every provision made for its success. They sailed from Greenhithe on 18th May, and vanished into the north. Up Davis Strait and Baffin's Bay they passed, the lineal descendants of those long-dead pioneers, and reached Lancaster Sound, which stretched away to the westward out of Baffin's Bay. Here they felt their way gingerly among the broken ice, creeping slowly but surely westward and southward until at last a sheltered spot was reached. Beechey Island it was called, and there the two vessels laid up for the winter.

As the long dark months passed the men were happy and contented. Workshops were built ashore, there were ice sports, hunting, botanizing—every amusement that a good commander can devise and a happy crew enjoy. Only Franklin and his officers knew that, through knavery or accident, more than half the tinned food had gone bad, and that blank disaster was in store if they had to spend another winter in the ice.

At last spring came, and with it the breaking up of the floe that held the vessels so fast. A channel was cut to the edge, and through it the *Erebus* and *Terror* made for open water. Channel after channel was explored by the vessels, and ever nearer they got to the goal of their voyage, until at last they reached the parting of the ways. South of King William Land lay open sea, with a clear passage, had they but known it, to Behring Strait and America—the North-West Passage, in fact. But, from sheer imagination, whoever made the charts upon which they were working had marked an

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isthmus of land barring the path and apparently cutting off all possibility of pushing any farther in that direction.

So Franklin decided to make west and north again; and the result was that he got caught in the main Polar ice-pack and held fast. Travelling parties were soon arranged and set out full of hope; and it was one of these, led by Graham Gore, that crossed to Cape Herschel, far to the southward, and by so doing actually discovered the North-West Passage.

This was a glorious success. The hope of centuries had been realized, the expedition had succeeded where generations of explorers had failed. With delight and exultation Gore made his way back to the camp which had been formed on the ice by the vessels. But when they got there Sir John Franklin lay dying. He had long been ailing; the anxiety and hardships he had undergone were taking their toll. It must have comforted his passing spirit to know that his expedition had succeeded in its task.

It was a sad and dispirited crew that waited for the vessels to get clear of the ice again with the summer of 1847. For things were beginning to look blacker than ever. Not only was the food supply running low, but the ships themselves had been so battered by the ice that it was scarcely likely they would hold together in the open sea. Officers and men began to die, too, and the little food that was left turned bad.

There was only one course open, and that was to build small boats that should navigate the narrow water-lanes better, and sledges on which to carry them over the ice to where they might be floated. A vast work this was, with men sick at heart and weak in body. The sledges were each 23 ft. long, and, when loaded with the boat and all they had to carry, worked out at a load of 200 lb. a man. What hope was there of covering any distance under such a handicap?

On 22nd April, 1848, the vessels were abandoned



## The North-West Passage

and the long journey began. The men started with all they could carry, including mementoes of those who had died, knowing full well that a like fate was but too certainly in store for them. On and on they went, ridding themselves as they went of much of their load—cooking stoves, blankets, instruments—more, indeed, than they could properly spare.

One by one men were dropped by the way. One boat was abandoned, a few men took to the other and met their death in that way. The remainder waited patiently for the end on the ice.

Not a man of Franklin's Expedition ever returned. Only their records, many years later, were picked up by search-parties and were thus able to tell the world that after three centuries of hard endeavour Englishmen had found the North-West Passage at the cost of their lives.

As Tennyson wrote over Franklin's monument in Westminster Abbey:

"Not here! The cold North hath thy bones, and thou,  
Heroic sailor soul,  
Art passing on thy happier voyage now  
Toward no earthly pole."

## CHAPTER VII

### David Livingstone in the Heart of Africa

**W**HEN David Livingstone went out to Africa as a missionary in 1840 almost the whole of that vast Continent, except for the North and a fringe round the coast, was a blank so far as human knowledge went. Mungo Park had, as we have seen, explored the Niger; and Dutch Boers had settled over a large area in the South; but the centre was indeed Darkest Africa, save for the somewhat vague information handed down from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Jesuit missionaries, who at one time or another explored most of the interior and sent back stories of Nyassa and Tanganyika. But they had generally been martyred in the attempt.

Several times the great Continent had been traversed by Portuguese and others who, by some extraordinary mischance, entirely missed the great features of the land that Livingstone afterwards discovered. They actually passed between the great lakes and never so much as suspected their existence; they crossed huge rivers and did not even give a thought as to where they rose or whither they flowed. Gold and slaves were all they wanted, and the world was little the wiser and none the better for their toils and travels.

In starting the story of David Livingstone's explorations we must first pick him up at Linyanti, once the residence of the great Makololo king, Sebituane, who had hewn out for himself a huge kingdom in the heart of Africa. It was not Livingstone's first visit to this monarch, for during the years of his missionary en-



# David Livingstone

deavours among the Boers he made a journey of exploration up into the unknown interior, accompanied by his friend Oswell, and even reached Sesheke, a native town on the Zambesi.

The sight of the great river started a train of thought that was to bear good fruit. If all went well he decided he would return and follow that mighty stream to the sea. For the time being he had to abandon his ideas and go back to the Transvaal, where his wife and family were waiting for him and beginning to grow uneasy at his absence.

Some time elapsed and various things happened which ended in Livingstone breaking up his home in South Africa and sending his family back to England. The way was now open to allow him to return to the interior and carry out the exploration on which he had set his heart. With a few bearers he made his way back to the Zambesi. During his absence Sebituane had died, and his son Sekeletu was reigning in his stead.

It had been Livingstone's intention, at first, to found a settlement in this land; but fever and the tsetse fly were too prevalent, so he made his way along the course of the Zambesi, and when that failed him struck westward until he reached Loanda, the Portuguese colony on the West Coast. There he collected such things as he wanted and, after a short rest, returned on his tracks to Linyanti, where we pick him up on his first great journey of exploration.

It was on 3rd November, 1855, that Livingstone set out from Linyanti on the long journey down the Zambesi to the East Coast. He had a horse and several donkeys, twelve oxen, a good supply of fresh butter and honey, and enough goods to enable him to barter along the way. All this wealth had been given by his friend Sekeletu, the son of Sebituane, who remembered the favour his father had shown the white man. Sekeletu even went with him as far as Shesheke,

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accompanied by a couple of hundred warriors, and a party of Makololo volunteered to accompany the expedition as porters and guides.

Travelling was exceedingly difficult, for the Zambesi proved hardly navigable, so swift was its current and so treacherous its depths. But Livingstone's curiosity had been roused by stories of the "smoke that sounds," as the Makololo said—of the great waterfalls which no man dared approach, as another told him.

One morning, with a bend in the river, he saw five columns of vapour rising in the still air. The scenery around was very beautiful, the river was dotted with islands, and the vivid green of the forest came down the bank to the very water's edge. And above all was heard the distant thunder of the falls, the greatest in the world, twice as deep as those of Niagara.

Leaving his heavy canoe and getting into a lighter craft managed by men well acquainted with the rapids above the falls, Livingstone sat wondering at the magnificence around, as he was whirled on towards the lip of the great waterfall. They beached the boat on a tree-covered islet that overlooked the mist-swept depths.

"From the end of the island where we first landed," says Livingstone, "though within a few yards of the Falls, no one could see where the vast body of water went; it seemed to lose itself in a transverse fissure only 80 feet wide. Creeping with awe to the end of the island, I peered down into a large rent which had been made from bank to bank of the broad Zambesi, and saw that a stream 1,800 yards broad leaped down 320 feet, and then became suddenly compressed into a space of 15 or 20 yards. The Falls are simply caused by a crack in a hard basaltic rock from the right to the left bank, and then prolonged from the left bank away through 30 or 40 miles of hills."

There is, indeed, nothing in the world so magnificent and awe-inspiring as the Victoria Falls, as Livingstone



## David Livingstone

christened them. The whole volume of water falls 400 feet to be exact, in an unbroken mass; then it is dashed into a boiling, seething welter through which none can see distinctly, for clouds of spray arise that are borne on the air currents over two hundred feet above the falls and can be seen twenty miles away.

Before leaving the Falls, Livingstone landed on one of the islands, which seem almost unnaturally luxuriant on account of the never ceasing rain caused by the spray, and planted a hundred peach and apricot stones, hoping to found an orchard there; but though the seeds struck and sprang up into saplings, they were all devoured by the hippopotami that abound in the river.

On leaving the Victoria Falls the party struck north-eastward into the Batoko country which extends for some miles below the Falls. This was to escape the rapids of the Zambesi. Sekeletu had given the explorer 114 men, and these formed themselves into regular camps and kept good order. "Each party knew its own spot in the encampment, and each took it in turn to pull grass to make my bed, so that I lay luxuriously."

As they approached the river again the forest became denser and the natives fiercer. Indeed, at the spot where the Loangwa flows into the Zambesi, an army of blacks collected on the river banks determined to stop him taking boat. The night was spent in great uncertainty, for the little camp was surrounded, and there was no knowing what daylight might bring forth.

Livingstone had secured one fair-sized canoe, and in this, as soon as dawn appeared, he embarked his cattle and men; and got them transported to the other side, while he himself remained to the last, and even kept the warlike negroes in check by showing them his watch, setting the grass alight with his burning-glass, and doing other tricks of "magic." By nightfall the whole

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party was across the river, joyful at their escape from what might have been a fatal end to the expedition.

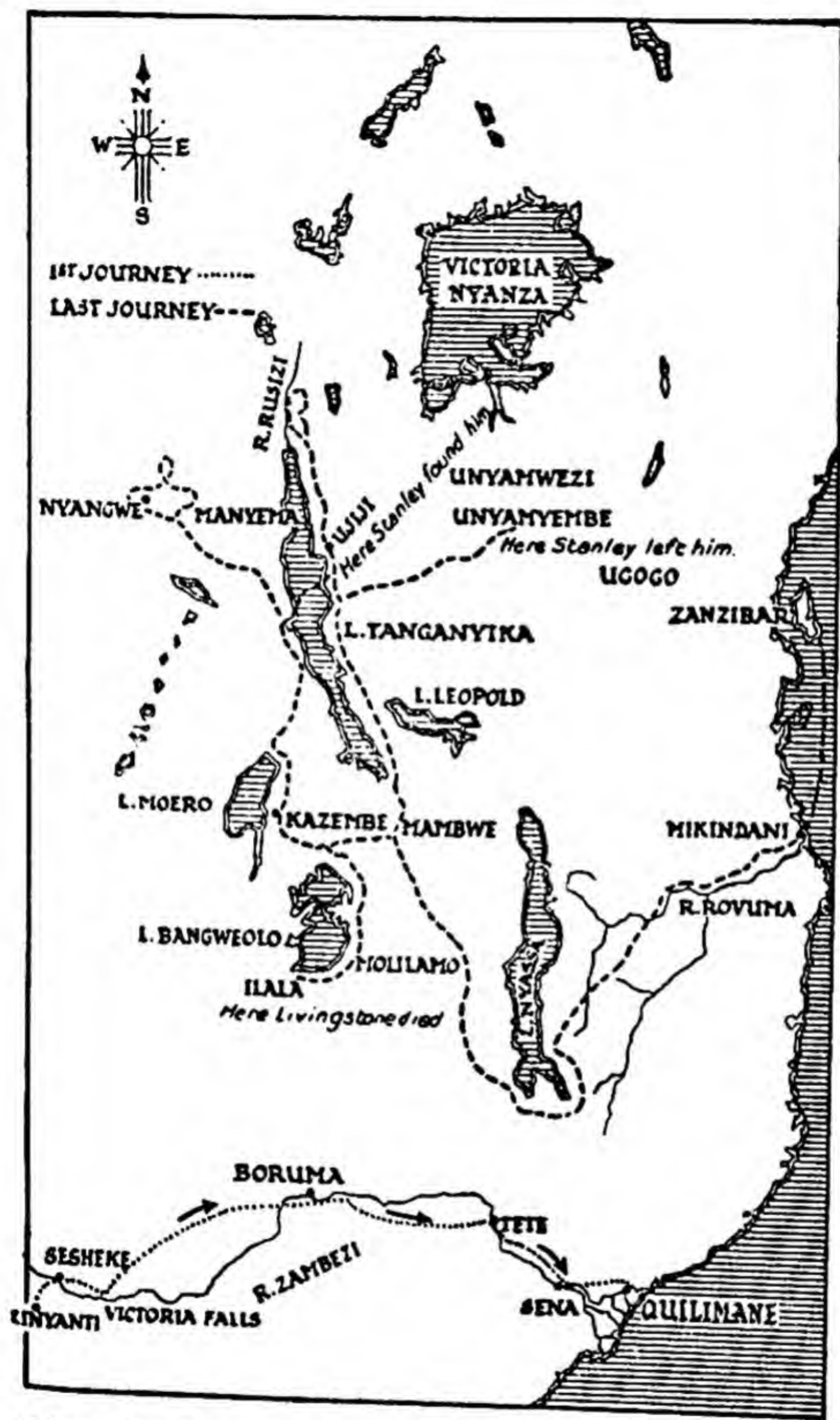
It was here that they came upon what had once been a Portuguese outpost, sent from their Eastern settlements. There was a ruined town, and in the debris of the church Livingstone found a broken bell engraved with I.H.S. and a cross—symbols that, long ago, Christianity had already been in this remote spot.

Two days later he was surprised to meet a black man, wearing a hat and coat, crossing from one of the river islands. He turned out to be a Portuguese subject who had come up the river from Tete, and he told Livingstone that the Portuguese had been at war with the natives on this north bank of the river for some years past. He urged him to cross at once, for Mpende, the native chieftain, would show no mercy on any white man he met. Yet, when Livingstone asked for the loan of his canoe, that he might benefit by this good advice, the gentleman in the hat and coat refused point-blank, and betook himself off without further ado.

It was not long before Mpende's warriors gathered around; but however warlike their intentions, they started no open fight. As soon as Livingstone's men had encamped the natives approached, and lighted a huge fire into which sundry magical substances were put. The object of all this was to avert any evil witchcraft the white men might desire to practise upon them. When the travellers sought to purchase food, one of Mpende's learned men pranced round them, roaring like a lion; while Mpende himself, accepting their request as homage to his own greatness, gave them a present of chaff, and roared with laughter at this capital joke.

But Livingstone was in no mood for joking, and he feared that the merry black monarch would carry his humour too far. To cheer up his men he slaughtered an ox and made a great feast; which so inspired his Makololo followers with courage that they cried: "You





Map of Central East Africa, showing the routes followed by Livingstone in his first and last journeys.

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have seen us with elephants, but you don't know what we can do with men!" This sounded very fine, though if the truth were told, Livingstone was not much impressed. But, on receiving one of the ox-legs, Mpende decided to be amiable to this white man, and ended by lending him canoes to enable him to cross to the south bank of the river. Two spoons and a shirt sealed the warlike sovereign's friendship for ever, and the next morning with mutual assurances of kindness the explorer and he said farewell.

Across the Zambesi Livingstone found peaceful tribes who offered no resistance and thankfully accepted his presents of elephant flesh and other game. The forests were full of interest for him, and he made valuable observations during the leisurely and peaceful days that passed on the remainder of the journey to the Portuguese town of Tete, where he arrived on 3rd March, 1856.

Major Sicard, the Portuguese Governor, had expected his arrival, for natives from up-river had come with strange tales of "the son of God, who was able to take down the sun from heaven and place it under his arm," this being their interpretation of Livingstone's sextant with its artificial horizon!

After a short stay with the hospitable major, Livingstone pursued his way through the Portuguese colony to the coast, and reached Quilemané on the 20th May. He sent his men back to Tete, where they made a small encampment and awaited his return for the second expedition, which was not to take place until 1859.

We must now make a jump of eight years. During this time Livingstone went to England twice, and carried out a second exploration of the Zambesi. It was on this expedition that he discovered Lake Nyassa and the Shire highlands, both of which had long been talked of



# David Livingstone

at Tete, though the Portuguese had never troubled to explore them. Livingstone was thus the founder of the large and prosperous Colony of Nyassaland. He returned from his second journey of exploration in 1864.

On 13th August, 1865, David Livingstone left London on his third and final expedition. He went first to India, to spend a few months with old friends, and then crossed over to Zanzibar, where he was warmly received by the Sultan, to whom the British Government had just presented a handsome steamer. There he spent a month or so in preparing for his expedition, buying six camels, four buffaloes, four donkeys and a couple of mules.

From India he had brought a few "boys" from the Nassick Mission, an establishment where slaves rescued by British boats in Southern waters were cared for. He also had thirteen Sepoys, lent by the Indian Government, and some men from Johanna, one of the Comoro Islands, who had served with him before.

When all was ready, Livingstone embarked his crew and animals on the *Penguin*, a small Government boat that ran them south to Mikindani Bay. There he was landed, a solitary white man in charge of that mixed assortment of humanity, to push his way into unknown Africa!

On 4th April, 1866, the party set out from Mikindani, making for the Rovuma River, which was to take them part of their way to Nyassa. From the very first Livingstone had reason to complain of his men, for the Sepoys were lazy and unkind to the animals, the men from Johanna thought of nothing but stealing, and the Nassick "boys" were a nuisance in every way and thoroughly spoiled. So the Sepoys were sent back to the coast, though not before their cruelty had caused the death of several valuable beasts, buffaloes and camels.

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Except for these troubles with his people, the expedition met with no adventures on the way to Nyassa, which was reached on 8th August. Finding no canoes nor means of transport across the lake, Livingstone marched round its southern extremity, where he found the whole land in the worst throes of the slave trade.

Far as they had got from home, new troubles now arose, for the Johanna men, hearing that the natives were warlike and inclined to put up a stiff resistance, came in a body to Livingstone and demanded to be sent home. When he demurred and tried to reason with them, they simply tossed their loads to the ground and marched off, to reach Zanzibar in due time and give a false alarm that the expedition and its leader had been massacred.

Livingstone now made a north-westerly course towards Lake Tanganyika. His party consisted of but a few men, yet the bad elements had been cleansed from it, and all who remained went on with keenness and loyalty. The country was magnificent in its verdure, and the Bisa Mountains, over which their path lay, were covered with woods and grassland. But lovely as the land was, it was the victim of famine, for slave raids had been so bad that men were scarce, and those who escaped the cruel Arab slavers lived in hiding and by stealth.

It was here that the first real disaster came, on the 20th January, 1867, near a place called Lisunga. A few days earlier Livingstone had engaged two men of the Wa-yao to act as porters and interpreters, and the load slung on the back of one of them was the medicine chest containing every atom of drug in the expedition. Now, as they were passing through a dense forest, clinging to the bare vestige of a track, which only a black man's eye could discern, these men deserted with their packs, nor were they ever found again.



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Thus Livingstone found himself in the heart of a fever-stricken country, without quinine or any other drug.

But with undaunted courage this brave man pushed on. Food was scarce, and he was reduced to maize and goat's milk. Then the goats were stolen and he had no milk. Sometimes he was so prostrate with fever that he could not move during the day. One entry in his Journal says: "Ill with fever still. . . . I have singing in my ears, and can hardly hear the tick of the chronometer."

Occasionally the luck changed, as when they visited a chief named Moamba—"a big, stout, public-house looking person, with a slight outward cast in his left eye"—who nevertheless replenished their stock of food and treated them with unwonted hospitality.

At last, on 1st April, a sheet of water came into view. This was Tanganyika, or Lake Liemba, as Livingstone called it. Peaceful it stretched before him, as it had lain since the world began. "In the morning and evening huge crocodiles may be observed; hippotami snort by night and at early morning." There he rested after his journey and tried to shake off the rheumatic fever from him. Many a man would have rested there for good, satisfied with what he had done without striving for yet more toil and hazard. But Livingstone was not one of those. He had heard of Lake Moerio, that lay still further to the westward, and thither he now decided to make his way.

There were many difficulties to be overcome, however, for the Arabs were at war with some of the native tribes, and in one native village he had to stay three months and ten days, while matters settled themselves in the neighbourhood. It was here that he met Tippoo Tib, a slave-raider, who later became famous. The Arabs were exceedingly kind, as it turned out, and the rest did Livingstone good. He learned from his Arab

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acquaintance something about the land he wished to explore, and even obtained information which, though he discredited it at the time, has since been shown to have been correct.

At last, on 22nd September, he started for Lake Moerio, which was reached six weeks later. He was ill again, but pushed on further south into the land of Kazembe, a chief with a terrible squint, whose welcome was warm, though not without its embarrassments; for among the first people presented to Livingstone was the lord-high-executioner, with a broad and exceedingly sharp sword over his arm, and hanging round his neck a neat sort of scissors-like instrument for cutting off ears. When Livingstone observed that his must be nasty work, he grinned, and the explorer noted that not a few, even in Kazembe's inner circle, had been to the executioner for treatment in the matter of ears.

The whole of the winter of 1867-68 was spent either on the shores of Lake Moerio or exploring the vicinity. As spring came Livingstone began to get anxious to be off again, this time to explore yet another great lake he had heard of to the south—Lake Bangweolo. The remaining Nassick boys refused to go with him, so, on 14th April, he started with only five men, leaving nearly all his stuff with a kindly Arab named Mohammed bin Saleh.

Passing through Kazembe's crop-eared country the explorer pushed ever south until, to his great joy, the waters of Lake Bangweolo spread out before him. For a time he explored the northern waters of this lake, whose extent he never quite realized, and then made his way back to winter quarters, where the Nassick boys besought him to take them on again.

All this time a fixed idea had been gaining ground in Livingstone's mind that Lake Bangweolo and Lake Moerio, with the great river Luapola that joins them, actually form the head-waters of the Nile. The discovery





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"DR. LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME!"





## David Livingstone

of these head-waters had long been the object of much speculation, and the explorer now began to feel convinced that he had solved the mystery.

After resting and recovering his health among his Arab friends, Livingstone started off for Ujiji, on the northern end of Lake Tanganyika, where he had left instructions for supplies, medicines, and letters to be forwarded from the East Coast. Ujiji was a well-known Arab trading centre, and no difficulty should be experienced in refitting his expedition there.

"It is a motley group," he writes of the party that set off, "composed of Mohammed and his friends, a gang of Wanyamwezi hangers-on and strings of wretched slaves yoked together in their heavy slave-sticks. Some carry ivory, others copper, or food for the march, whilst hope and fear, misery and villainy may be read on the various faces that pass in line out of this country, like a serpent dragging its accursed folds away from the victim it had paralysed with its fangs."

The state of Livingstone's health was now growing really serious. In and out of water, as they waded through rivers, constantly drenched in tropical down-pours of rain, he had no chance of regaining his strength. The Arabs were kind and nursed him, carrying him much of the way on a sort of slung cot, and feeding him up with the best fare they could.

On 14th March, 1869, they reached Ujiji. But alas! the supplies Livingstone had been so eagerly expecting had vanished by the way. Out of the eighty pieces of valuable cloth for bartering only eighteen were left; all the buffaloes had died, and only a few clothes, which were none the less valuable, as well as a trifle of tea and coffee, were awaiting him.

Discouraged but not despairing, on 12th July the explorer started from Ujiji, crossed Tanganyika, and in company with a large party of Arab traders made his way to Nyangwe, on the banks of the Lualaba.

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Three lines have sufficed to tell this, yet it took Livingstone nearly two years to do the journey, two years of monotonous travelling here and there with the Arabs, gleaning information and suffering in health all the time.

He had begun to feel sure that the Lualaba, of which he had heard so much and which he had come so far to find, was either the western arm of the Nile or the eastern head-water of the Congo. Which of these it was now became the object of his life to find out.

But his men were sick of this constant trapesing up and down the country. They flatly refused to follow him, but with that extraordinary doggedness that carried him so far, Livingstone, who could scarcely crawl for weakness, started back to Ujiji to collect another party. Some Arab merchants joined him in the journey, and lucky it was for him that they did, for at Bambare a host of Manyema, hiding in the dense vegetation through which they had to force their way, poured a volley of spears into the caravan as it passed. Had it not been in some strength they would doubtless have made an open attack and massacred the travellers.

Livingstone's sight now began to weaken with ophthalmia, and his bodily pains grew so intense that every step jarred him. But after a weary journey the waters of Tanganyika were seen at last, and on 23rd October the caravan entered Ujiji.

To Livingstone's horror almost the first thing he learned was that the Sheriff of Ujiji had sold on his own account all the goods that had been sent up from the coast! Three thousands yards of calico and 700 lb. of beads had been disposed of in this way, and all the Sheriff offered by way of reparation was a rather dirty hand of friendship!

Livingstone was now destitute, save for the few bales of stuff he had left, a long way off, with Mohammed bin Saleh. His Arab friends generously offered to give him whatever he desired, but he was too proud to accept



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charity. Said bin Majid, a man of noble character, even promised to sell his ivory and give the money to the explorer, but he remained adamant.

Things had come to a desperate pass. He was far from any help, the men were utterly unreliable, and, more important than anything else, the Lualaba was yet waiting to be discovered.

Sick at heart, Livingstone sat down to rest. At least his health must be recovered, somehow; but the blackness of the outlook was poor medicine for a man in his state.

He arose one morning, when the outlook was blackest. Where could he possibly look for help? Who could even know of his dilemma, let alone rescue him from it? It was the 20th October.

"Susi came running at the top of his speed, and gasped out, 'An Englishman! I see him!' and off he darted to meet him. The American flag at the head of the caravan told of the nationality of the stranger. Bales of goods, baths of tin, huge kettles, cooking-pots, tents, etc., made me think this must be a luxurious traveller, and not one at his wit's end like me." A man advanced from the column and hastened up to the old veteran, who stood gazing at the apparition, as it well might have seemed to his feverish eyes.

"Doctor Livingstone, I presume!"

And with this now classical greeting the new-comer introduced himself as Henry Morton Stanley, who had been sent out to find the explorer, alive or dead.

A few words must suffice for Stanley's Expedition. Rumours of Livingstone's death had reached Europe and had been contradicted. Years passed, without definite news of the explorer, before the idea took shape that some sort of expedition should be sent to find him. The learned societies and the English newspapers talked the matter over from all points of view and were agreed that something ought to be done. But while they were

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discussing preliminaries, Mr. Gordon Bennett, owner of the *New York Herald*, sent out one of his correspondents, H. M. Stanley, furnished with unlimited credit, to find the explorer.

Of Stanley's own adventures there is no space to tell. Suffice it to say that by sheer competence and good management he won through to Ujiji in time to relieve Livingstone at the worst moment of his life. He brought letters, the first the explorer had received for years, news of the great world and stories of people and things that formed a bright contrast to the weary monotony of black men and their affairs.

The luxuries Stanley brought did the poor old man good after the uncooked corn-ears that had been his staple diet for long past. The free conversation with one of his own kind seemed to give him new life, and it was with unqualified delight that he settled down to a few months with his saviour.

Acting upon a suggestion in a letter from the Royal Geographical Society, they explored the north end of Tanganyika and made sure that the Nile did not issue from its waters. The Rusizi River was discovered to be a tributary to, and not, as some had imagined, an outlet from, the great lake. When this work was done, and both had rested a little, they made their way together to Unyanyembe, where Stanley, after vainly urging his friend to return with him to Europe, bade Livingstone a reluctant farewell.

Stanley drew a vivid picture of the veteran explorer. "He is about sixty years old. His hair has a brownish colour, his whiskers and moustache are very grey. He shaves his chin daily. When walking he takes a firm but heavy tread, like that of an over-worked or fatigued man. He is accustomed to wear a naval cap, by which he has been identified throughout Africa. His dress when I first saw him exhibited traces of patching and repairing, but was scrupulously neat. Whenever he



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began to laugh there was a contagion about it that compelled me to imitate him."

On 14th March the men bade one another good-bye. The old doctor accompanied Stanley part of the way, and then held out his hand. They grasped one another closely and then parted, and as he went eastward, Stanley, looking back, saw the bent old figure, in its grey clothes and cloth cap, wending its way back to the camp. "I waved a handkerchief to him, and he responded by lifting his cap." It was the last time Livingstone ever set eyes on a white man's face.

Stanley left him as much in the way of stores and equipment as he could, and promised to send up from Zanzibar more men and provisions, for Livingstone was now more certain than ever that the Lualaba was the Upper Nile, and was equally determined to trace it to its source. He was so sure, indeed, that he did not contemplate the advisability of sailing *down* it to verify his conviction.

Yet it was trying to have to wait so long for the help he had been promised. The days and weeks dragged by so slowly, and the entry in his Journal for 5th July—just two words—sums up Livingstone's state of mind: "Weary! Weary!"

But Stanley was as good as his word. Forty-seven porters and a good store of necessaries arrived in due course at Unyanyembe, and on the 2nd August the old man started for what he felt sure would prove the source of the Nile. Never had he had such fine fellows as these new men turned out to be; and long was it since he had been able to travel in such comfort. Yet never had he suffered so much as now, when he took to the path again after his long rest. Disease had him so firmly in grip that he grew daily weaker through loss of blood. But he held himself in his donkey-saddle as best he could and arrived on the banks of Lake Tanganyika nearly two months later.

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Pushing on with indomitable courage, for though he would not acknowledge it the hand of Death was already overshadowing him, he made his way down to the shores of Lake Bangweolo, though the vast marshes that surround it in the rainy season made it hard to see where land ended and lake began.

The whole district was one vast swamp. Water dripped through the roof of the frail hut on his head as he tried to sleep. When morning came, his bed was often standing in a pool that had seeped up during the night. The air was thick with millions of mosquitoes, and the ground dangerous with poisonous spiders and ants. Yet he pushed on, through March and April.

On the 21st April Livingstone tried to mount his donkey, but fell off. One of the men, named Chumah, caught him, placed him on his shoulders and carried him to the village. He was then put in a sort of litter and borne forward until the banks of the river were reached. A mattress was laid on the bottom of the canoe, and on this he was gently laid, though so weak had he become that he had to be lifted by head and heels, as his back was too tender to bear the pressure of a hand.

So they went on till a village called Ilala was reached, where a friendly chief named Chitambo lived.

At eleven o'clock that night Livingstone called in his boy Susi and asked him how many days it was to the Luapala. "I think, three days, Master," answered Susi. "Oh dear, dear!" sighed the old man.

A little later he called him in again, took some calomel, and then said, "All right, you can go out now."

At four o'clock the next morning, when his servants, half terrified at the silence, crept into the little hut, they found their beloved doctor kneeling by his bedside, his head buried in his hands. He had been dead some hours.

In his journeys David Livingstone not only dis-



## David Livingstone

covered the Zambesi, Lake Moerio, Lake Bangweolo and Lake Nyassa, but he opened up a huge territory which is one of Britain's great colonies. More than any other man he spread white civilization in Africa, and by his saintly life and unshakable resolution held up the white man as a model to countless thousands of savages. Few were more worthy than he of the burial in Westminster Abbey that was accorded to his remains when they were brought back from Central Africa.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Australia, New Zealand, and Captain Cook

**N**O one knows who first discovered Australia. From earliest times there were stories of the *Terra Australis Incognita*, the Unknown Land of the South, for *Australis* is, as we learn at school, the Latin for South. During his travels in China, Marco Polo heard stories of vast Southern continents, and many years later the Portuguese claimed to have found a Southern island.

Whoever may have been there first, the Dutch certainly *did* find Australia, and a great secret they made of it, too. They had long since established trading colonies in India, whence they sailed to Batavia, Bantam, Amboina and other places, and as early as 1606 a Dutch vessel touched on the western Australian coast, though unaware of the fact. Other ships, bound for New Guinea, occasionally got out of their course and sighted the islands or the mainland of the northern shores of the Continent. Between 1616 and 1620 fairly extensive explorations of the West Coast were made.

But it was reserved for Abel Tasman, in 1642, to throw more light on Australia than any previous mariner had done. Governor van Diemen, of Batavia, sent him out to circumnavigate the whole island, and further south he went than anyone had ever been, discovering the land now named after him, Tasmania, and pushing far east until he sighted a land he called Staaten Island, now known as New Zealand. "Here," he said, "we found abundance of inhabitants. They had very hoarse voices and were very large people." Striking north



# Captain Cook's Voyages

through the Pacific, he then made his way back to Batavia with reports of his discoveries.

In 1644 Tasman was sent back to take formal possession of the land for the States of Holland. But so jealous were the Dutch of the new land they had discovered that no account of the voyage was allowed to be published, and to this day the actual explorations of Tasman are but vaguely known.

In 1688, while on a buccaneering voyage about the world, William Dampier approached Australia from the island of Timor, and a very graphic, if unpleasant account he gives in his Journal of the people he met there. "Setting aside their human shape, they differ but little from brutes. They have great bottle-noses, full lips and wide mouths. The two fore-teeth of their upper jaw are wanting in all of them—men and women, old and young; whether they draw them out I know not; neither have they any beards."

Little, therefore, was known of the great southern land when, in July, 1768, Captain James Cook sailed down the Thames from Deptford in the *Endeavour*, with orders to proceed to Otaheite in the South Seas and observe the transit of Venus, and after that to prosecute discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere. This was Cook's first command of any importance, though he had already proved himself a skilful mariner. As subsequent voyages were to show, Cook was actually the greatest navigator the world has ever known.

The *Endeavour* was a barque carrying thirty-two guns and a complement of eighty-four. Besides Cook and his crew were Charles Green, the astronomer; Joseph Banks, of the Royal Society (afterwards the famous President); and Dr. Solander, a learned Swedish botanist. Provisions for eighteen months were carried, and every preparation made for a long voyage in uncharted waters.

We must now jump a whole year in Cook's voyage,

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during which he visited Otaheite, observed the transit of Venus and surveyed the neighbouring islands. On 15th August, 1769, the *Endeavour* sailed from Oteroah, and on 7th October sighted the east coast of North Island, New Zealand. Smoke was seen rising at different points, and as the vessel approached the shore further details were made out of pleasant hills and tree-filled valleys. Huts were seen, too, and before long crowds of natives assembled on the beach.

Towards four o'clock of the next afternoon anchor was cast at the mouth of a little river. It was a pleasant bay, surrounded by white rocks. Cook, Solander, and Banks went ashore in two boats, though they realized there was something ominous in the way the natives ran away as they pulled closer in to the beach. Cook ordered one of the boats to lie off the shore; the other was left in charge of four lads.

The little party had gone but a short distance away from the boat when four armed men, brandishing long spears, dashed out from the woods and made a rush to take possession of the boat upon the beach. Quick to see what their scheme was, the boys promptly shoved off and, being too small to man the heavy oars, let the boat drift out to sea. In the meantime the natives were fired upon, and, terrified by the noise, though suffering no actual harm, they fled for cover into the trees.

All this was very unfortunate, for Captain Cook wanted to be friends with the natives. So as soon as he was back on board the *Endeavour* he ordered three boats to be manned, and once more rowed ashore, accompanied by Banks, Solander and a native from Tahiti, named Tupia, whom they had induced to make the voyage with them. A group of some fifty Maoris were waiting for them on the beach, armed with long spears and polished green talc battle-axes with very sharp edges, capable of splitting a skull at a single



## Captain Cook's Voyages

blow. Their hair was drawn up on all sides and tied on top of the head; their faces were wonderfully tattooed in lines and circles, and very fierce they looked.

As soon as the marines had waded ashore, Cook and his friends stepped forward and Tupia addressed the natives in Tahitan, which they understood perfectly well. They listened in silence or with murmurs of approval as he unfolded the story of the great White Chief who meant them no harm but had come to see their land. Some of them even accepted a few glass beads. But they did not want the strangers, and soon showed open hostility again.

At last both sides began to lose their patience. The Maoris made threatening gestures which gave place to open violence; so Cook fired and killed four men. After this it was useless to think of getting upon good terms with the natives of these parts, so the anchor was weighed on 11th October, and they left Poverty Bay, as they called it, for Cook had been able to supply his ship with nothing but wood.

The *Endeavour* cruised along the coast in a southward direction, naming the most prominent features of the coast as they passed, and making sundry ineffectual attempts at opening up friendly relations with the Maoris. At one time they came alongside in their canoes and accepted presents, but this was merely a ruse to seize Tayeto, Tupia's boy, whom they bore off in triumph. Reluctantly Cook was obliged to fire at them, and amid the confusion caused by the cannonball, Tayeto threw himself into the water and was eventually picked up by the pinnace.

By 17th October Captain Cook, having been unsuccessful in finding a harbour, put about off a cape he called Cape Turnagain, and returned by the way he had come. He then coasted northwards and put in at Tolega Bay, where he ventured to land again. They were all delighted to find that the news of their

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coming had evidently not spread inland, for no hostility was shown them, and for the first time they were able to see the natives in their own surroundings.

The Maoris lived in large huts, crowded together, and surrounded by fruitful gardens. All the men and women, though especially the latter, were painted red, and, like the South Sea Islanders, they saluted one another by touching noses. What astonished the Europeans more than anything else, perhaps, was to see the boys whipping tops exactly as they had themselves done when young in far-away England. The men were wonderfully tattooed with spirals and marvellous ornamental designs. The bigger the chief the more ornate his tattooing. The same patterns of spirals and curves were to be seen in the carved woodwork of the huts, whose timbers were often moulded with leering, distorted faces, painted red and very terrifying to look upon. It was only here, however, that the Maoris welcomed the *Endeavour*.

Having watered and taken aboard wood, Cook weighed anchor and continued his cruise northward, little of any importance happening. Cape Van Diemen, the northernmost cape of North Island, was reached and doubled, and then they coasted down the western shore, past Mount Egmont, where a flagstaff was erected, the Union Jack hoisted, and formal possession taken of the country.

Scarcely had Cook doubled this peak when he found that the coast described the arc of a circle and afforded excellent opportunities for a good overhaul. In one of the many creeks thereabouts he determined to lay up the *Endeavour* and keel her. The Maoris proved unexpectedly friendly, and among the provisions they brought as presents were a number of half-gnawed bones that the surgeon had little difficulty in recognizing as human remains. The natives, indeed, showed no hesitation in saying that they ate their enemies, and



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enjoyed them, too. A little later they brought seven human heads, complete except for the brains which, it seems, were held in special esteem by those who knew what was what.

Cook was now practically certain that this land of Eacheinomauwe along which he had been coasting was really an island, though the officers held that it must be part of a much larger continent. So on 6th February, 1770, he weighed anchor from Ship Cove and sailed south-west. The tide was rising as they entered the channel that separates North and South Islands, and the current carried them with alarming speed towards the jagged teeth of rocks that studded the coast. On the south-east rose a magnificent snow-capped mountain that Cook christened Cape Campbell; the other side of the strait he called Cape Palliser.

Thanks to good seamanship and a muddy bottom Cook was able to anchor before the current had swept his ship upon the rocks, and with the turn of the tide the *Endeavour* got off. Two days after passing Cape Palliser the officers were called on deck and the Captain pointed out a headland jutting far into the sea. It was Cape Turnagain, and the sight of it proved once and for all that the land they had just explored was an island.

The *Endeavour* was now put about again and a southern course followed round the coast of South Island, which was so desolate and the shore so unapproachable that the vessel had usually to keep an offing of some ten to fifteen miles. At last, on 10th March, they rounded South Cape, the furthest extremity of South Island, as Cook thought, for they were so far from land that he had not even guessed the existence of Stewart Island.

Great waves from the south-west broke over the *Endeavour* as she doubled this cape, and Cook realized that such a heavy swell could only come from a vast stretch of open ocean. There was evidently no land

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farther south. So he decided to hug the shore and, after calling in at Dusky Bay, made a course for the north-east, creeping up along the coast of South Island, little tempted to run in nearer, for the jagged cliffs and snow-capped mountains were forbidding in the extreme.

On the 27th March the *Endeavour* entered her familiar quarters in Queen Charlotte's Sound, having sailed round the whole of New Zealand. Cook and his officers thought it one of the most forbidding places on the earth, nothing but a vast chain of mountains with only here and there a valley where life could be sustained. Well may we now smile at Cook's mistake! New Zealand is one of the choicest spots on the face of the globe, and the home of men of whom the Empire is proud.

So careful and accurate was the survey made in this single voyage, that even now, two hundred years later, the charts Cook made still form the basis of those used for the New Zealand coast.

Having accomplished this exploration so successfully, Cook intended to sail back for England, following a very southerly route, which would allow him to explore the mysterious Southern Continent—if there really was one. But after her months of buffeting the *Endeavour* was not fit for a long cruise in strange waters, or for the rough passage round Cape Horn. So, after consultation with his officers, Cook determined to make for the East Indies, touching first on the little-known shores of New Holland, as Australia was then called.

On 31st March, the coast of New Zealand disappeared over the horizon. Cape Farewell, Cook named the last promontory to be seen, and not until three weeks later, on 19th April, did the look-out sight land from the mast-head. With the very sketchy chart at his disposal Cook supposed he had struck Tasmania, and turning northward from the Cape, which he called Ram



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Head, he ran up the coast to a promontory that he named Cape Howe.

This first view of the Australian coast impressed them all very favourably. Cook thought "it had a very pleasing appearance," and seen from the sea its meadows and woods formed a happy contrast to the rugged coasts of New Zealand. Smoke was observed, showing that the land was inhabited, but for some time no living person was sighted.

Between Cape Howe and Sydney Cove, Cook charted the coast accurately, but made no attempt to land until they reached Botany Bay, which got its name from the number of new botanical specimens Solander and Banks discovered there. They arrived in April, the autumn of the Australian year, so even then they did not see at their best the Banksias (named after Sir Joseph) and other flowering bushes and shrubs.

But while they were in raptures over this wealth of new specimens, other specimens, this time of the human species, made their appearance, brandishing weapons and presenting a very terrifying sight, for their black bodies and faces were streaked with white paint. They advanced without any trace of fear and launched their spears and "crooked scimitars," or boomerangs, at the strangers. Notwithstanding all the blandishments of Tupia—who was here quite useless as an interpreter—and the tempting gifts held out by Cook and his men, the Australian aborigines refused to make friends. Nor would they accept any presents, which, as a matter of fact, they seemed quite unable to understand the use of. From what could be seen of their huts and canoes they were cruder and more savage than any race that had ever been heard of.

Having watered at Botany Bay and explored the neighbourhood, Cook weighed anchor on 6th May and pursued his voyage northward, keeping out a couple of miles or so from the shore. Navigation along this coast

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was monotonous, though there was always something to do in observing and recording the remarkable changes in the depths of the sea. They had to keep a weather eye open for breakers and shoals. The splendid harbour on which Sydney was built at a later date, was passed unnoticed, though Cook called the opening Port Jackson, after Sir George Jackson, Secretary to the Admiralty.

At Cape Byron they found themselves being carried back by a current; Mount Warning and Point Danger were named on account of shoals and breakers. The *Endeavour* next made Point Look-Out, also named from breakers seen ahead. On a closer approach a wide bay opened out before them, which they called Moreton's Bay, and the point to the north of it Cape Moreton. Land was not touched again until they reached Bustard Bay, where a wild turkey was shot and thus for ever gave its name to the place. Aborigines were seen here, and they came across a rude native camp where were found several pieces of bark, evidently used as bedding, and roughly-shaped vessels of the same material. Even Tupia shook his head in superiority and said, "Poor wretches!"

So the voyage went on, with monotonous regularity, until 10th June, when the *Endeavour* rounded Cape Grafton. Shortly after nine in the evening the soundings, which were being taken every fifteen minutes, showed that the depth was increasing and shoals that had been perceived earlier in the evening were being well avoided. Thus relieved from anxiety, Cook and all save the officer of the watch, retired to their bunks and were soon asleep.

Profound silence reigned on board ship. Suddenly, at eleven o'clock, there was a grinding crunch that awakened every soul on board. The *Endeavour* was aground!

Cook, who had dashed to the deck, saw at once that



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the situation was serious, for the tide was at its full. Without loss of time he ordered guns, barrels, ballast, everything that came to hand, to be hove overboard. The sloop was put out to sea, with a tow-line attached, but still the *Endeavour* remained fast. With the coming of daylight the situation was realized in all its danger. The shore was eight miles off, and there was not a square inch of rock or island to take refuge on if the vessel broke up, as she appeared likely to do at any moment.

At last, with incredible labour the ship was warped off, officers and men working alike at the capstan. A huge hole had been smashed into her stern, and Cook had this blocked up by hauling under the keel a studding-sail filled with oakum, wool, and as much greasy stuff as they could find on board. With this patch they were able to keep the water out until she could make the shore. Luckily they were able to land at the mouth of a river they named the Endeavour, and there they ran the ship high enough on the beach to lay on her side and get at the rent in her hull. Hardened sailors as they were, the sight that met their eyes struck them all with amazement, for the only thing that had kept the ship from sinking like a stone was the great jagged piece of rock upon which she had struck, and which had snapped off in the hole, and thus helped to stop it!

Six weeks were spent in Endeavour River, while the ship was being set to rights. This gave the sick men a chance of recovering and stretching their legs, while the officers made various explorations in the neighbourhood. They saw kangaroos, killed an opossum, and named many new plants and insects. They also made acquaintance with the aborigines, who were as shy and unfriendly as usual. Indeed, they were within an ace of meeting with another disaster through the ill-will of these black men, who, according to their usual practice, set fire to the bush windwards, whereby they nearly burned the whole of

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the stores that had been stacked on the beach, and even imperilled the ship.

For all their care in patching her up, the *Endeavour* was never herself again. They put to sea on 4th August, only to find that she was leaky and crank, and the dangerous navigation of the rock-infested coast kept the officers at their wits' end for weeks to come. But still they crept on, for provisions were running low, and the coast offered little chance of renewing them.

On the 21st April, Cook sighted and rounded Cape York, the northernmost promontory of Australia. Torres Strait he christened Endeavour Strait, and the whole of the land they had cruised up with so much trouble he named New South Wales, from a resemblance he fancied it bore to the southern coast of Wales.

A short passage was now made to Batavia, where the *Endeavour* was repaired; but the men were sick and wearied after their long voyage, and the climate of Batavia proved unhealthy. Nearly all hands were taken with fever, and many deaths occurred, among them being Green, the astronomer.

As soon as he could, Cook put to sea again, and after a brief call at the Cape of Good Hope and St. Helena, anchored in the Downs on 11th June, 1772, having been away for close on four years.

But Cook's exploration work was by no means concluded. On his return he was promoted Commander, for hitherto his rank had only been that of Lieutenant, and after a short spell of rest was sent to sea again. Of Captain Cook's second voyage, there is neither space nor need to speak. Suffice it to say that he called in once again at New Zealand and spent most of the remainder of the cruise in exploring the Pacific Islands.

The third voyage of discovery was undertaken at the orders of the Government, who directed him to find the North-West Passage by approaching it from the Pacific. Two vessels were provided, the *Resolution*, in



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which Cook (who had been promoted to Captain) sailed, and the *Discovery*, commanded by Captain Clerke.

They sailed from Plymouth on 12th July, 1776, called in at the Cape, visited Prince Edward Land, Kerguelen Land, and thence sailed to Tasmania, sighting South Western Cape on 24th January, 1777. Only a few days were spent here, and no considerable explorations were undertaken, sail being made for New Zealand on 30th January. They dropped anchor in Queen Charlotte's Sound in the middle of February, and made a short stay, during which Cook persuaded two Maoris to accompany him on a voyage to Tahiti.

After leaving New Zealand, the first land-fall was at the Island of Mangaia, which was discovered on 29th March. Some of the natives came aboard—strong, well-shaped men, tattooed from head to foot, and wearing long beards; but they would not let Cook go ashore. For some time he cruised among the Islands which now bear his name, unable to land, either on account of poor anchorage, or because the natives were too hostile. Yet he was in great need of wood and water, as well as fresh food for his crew.

At last he put in at the Friendly Islands, whose name had long been evidence of the spirit in which they welcomed Europeans, and there a good store of provisions and water was laid in, while the inhabitants made their arrival the occasion of a great festival.

Poulaho, King of the Friendly Islands, was a fat man, of immense importance, and very curious to know what had brought the Europeans to his country. When asked to visit the Captain he hesitated on the score of *tabu*, which ordained that no one was to pass above his head. However, on Captain Cook promising that no member of the crew should walk over the cabin while he was in it, his majesty gave a timid consent.

Three months were spent with the kindly inhabitants of the Tonga Islands, and on 17th July the two ships set

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sail for Tahiti, which was reached a few days later. Six weeks were spent there before sailing for Huaheine, where land was ceded to them by the chiefs for the establishment of a small settlement. A house was built and a garden dug and stocked with European cabbages. The two Maoris and some other natives who had been picked up at various places they had called at were settled in this little colony.

On the 24th December, a small island was discovered and named Christmas Island, in honour of the season. For the next few weeks the two vessels cruised about the Pacific Ocean, ever working further northward. It was on the 18th January, 1778, that the outlying islands of a large new group were sighted. These were the Sandwich or Hawaii Islands which no white man had ever yet set foot on. Numbers of canoes shot out from the shore to meet the new-comers, and to Cook's delight he found the natives understood Tahitian and were disposed to be friendly.

But their friendliness was soon found to be little more than a cloak for thieving, and a good many blows had to be given and a man shot dead before the Hawaiians could be kept within bounds. As soon as the *Resolution* and *Discovery* had dropped anchor Cook went ashore, and was received by the natives with almost exaggerated submission. This gave promise of a pleasant visit, for provisions appeared to be abundant, and fruit, pigs, fowls, and fresh vegetables began to arrive in quantities. At the same time a party of natives assisted the sailors in filling the water-casks and getting them on board.

A jolly month was spent in Hawaii. Then the captain determined to start his exploration of the north, to find if there were any passage to Europe to be made by the north-west. On 27th February the two vessels left Hawaii, and six days later sighted the coast of North America, New Albion as it had been named by Sir Francis Drake. Coasting northward, and passing



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unwittingly the Straits of Juan de Fuca, the two vessels followed the line of what is now called Vancouver Island—young George Vancouver, who was afterwards to explore those regions, was, indeed, serving as a midshipman on the *Resolution* during this actual voyage.

When Hope Bay was reached they put in to water. As soon as the shore party waded from the boats they were met by Indians, painted in a most alarming manner, who offered them pelts and all kinds of strange implements in exchange for beads and glass. Cook christened the place King George's Sound, but the native name of Nootka has since survived.

The voyage northward was then resumed, and passing right up by Alaska, through the Aleutian Islands, and past Prince of Wales Cape, the most westerly point of America, Cook entered the Behring Strait on the 11th April. The following week he came in contact with the northern ice.

In vain did he try to survey. The ice presented an insuperable barrier, against which Cook struggled for a month. He got as far north as Lat.  $70^{\circ} 41'$ , but there he reluctantly came to the conclusion that, with the advancing winter, it would be folly to stay longer. So he decided to return to the Sandwich Islands and chart them thoroughly before attempting to fight the ice again.

By November, the *Discovery* and *Resolution* were back in warm latitudes, and towards the end of the month the snow-capped peaks of Hawaii, or Owhyhee, as they called it, were sighted. The Englishmen were welcomed with delight by the natives, but the weather was too rough for them to land, and they had to stand off and on for several weeks. On the 17th January, 1779, however, anchor was cast in a bay called by the natives Kealakekua, the sails were unbent and yards and topmasts struck. In a very short time both vessels were crowded with natives, who soon began their usual pilfering and barefaced robbery.

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Though he did not know it at the time, the arrival of Cook fitted in with an old native prophecy relating to the coming of a god named Rono, and he was accordingly received with divine honours that amazed and embarrassed him not a little. He was obliged to participate in feasts of rather revolting under-done pork; but this was all to their advantage in another direction, for they were loaded with gifts of food and whatever else they desired.

All might yet have passed off with little worse than a bad attack of indigestion, had not an unfortunate misunderstanding occurred over a native boat belonging to a chieftain named Pareea, which one of Cook's officers seized by mistake. A discussion took place, which grew warmer, and finally came to blows. At last one of the sailors felled Pareea with a blow from an oar. This worked both parties into the utmost excitement, which ended with the natives capturing the pinnace of the *Discovery*.

Cook realized at once that strong measures were necessary. He decided to take the king prisoner and keep him hostage until the pinnace should be returned. So he landed with a detachment of marines, and marched straight to the royal palace. He was received with the customary courtesy, and after partaking of a meal he invited King Terreboo to accompany him back to the *Resolution*.

All would have been well had the king accepted, as he wanted and meant to do; but just as they were about to embark Terreboo's wife hurried up and in a whisper urged him to stay behind. Other friends joined in her persuasions, and at last he turned back, with a lame excuse. Seeing that his scheme had failed, Cook turned to go to the boats. This was apparently the signal for a preconcerted attack. With yells and shrieks the islanders rushed on the little party of Europeans. Seeing what was happening the marines in the boat, lying a short distance off the beach, opened fire.



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The last ever seen of Captain Cook was as he waved to the boats to cease firing and beckoned them to come in at once to embark his men who were waiting on the beach. With whoops of joy the natives struck him down, stabbing him in a hundred places.

Thus died the greatest navigator the world has ever known.

A few days later, when severe reprisals had taken place, some of the natives brought aboard the *Resolution* all that remained of Captain Cook, his hands, recognizable by certain scars, his head, stripped of flesh, and portions of the body, which were buried with full funeral honours.

After Captain Cook's death the command of the expedition devolved on Captain Clerke, who carried on the exploration of the North-West coast of America, but failed to find the North-West Passage, and eventually returned home to England. The track of Captain Cook's voyage round the Australian coast is shown in the map on page 169.

## CHAPTER IX

### The First Crossing of America : Lewis and Clark

**I**T is rather curious to think that the United States of America owes an enormous portion of her territory to the hatred Napoleon the First felt for England, yet this is a fact. Until 1803, the western boundary of the United States was the great Mississippi River; beyond it lay the huge wedge of territory known as Louisiana, with its peak at New Orleans and its broad end stretching across to the Far West. The story of La Salle's discovery of the Mississippi and how he planted the French flag at New Orleans is told in another chapter. That had all happened a hundred years and more before the Revolution robbed the French kings of their crown.

Louisiana was as big as the whole of the British Isles, France, Spain, Germany, Portugal, and Italy thrown into one; and it was France's greatest overseas territory. But when Napoleon embarked upon war with England, he realized that we should soon make a point of landing troops and seizing this prosperous and almost virgin colony. So, to stop Britain getting there, he sold it hurriedly to the United States for \$15,000,000, or about £3,000,000.

When the United States took over this vast tract of land it was practically an unknown country. Far away to the setting sun stretched the boundless prairies, covered with countless herds of buffalo. Thousands of square miles of virgin forest lay there, where no feet had trod save those of Redskins, whose wild war-cries and painted faces were the terror of all who pushed along the fringes of civilization. And far beyond all were the



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huge, jagged peaks of snow-capped mountains gleaming in the blue distance, the haunt of bears and wolves.

And out of this mysterious, awe-inspiring, unknown land came the great Missouri River in a resistless torrent. "The secret of the Missouri is the secret of the Northern Continent," was the saying of the settlers. It was the key to the Far West. Even the adventurous French had never followed the great river to its source, and its broad waters were a challenge to the new owners of the land.

Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, took up the silent challenge of the river at once. No sooner was the purchase of the Louisiana territory complete than he commissioned one of his secretaries, Captain Meriwether Lewis, and another trustworthy man, William Clark, to collect a party and track the Missouri to its source, making their way thence to the Pacific coast, which no man had yet reached by crossing the Continent. They would be entirely on their own resources, for after leaving St. Louis, the last settlement on the banks of the Mississippi, they could rely upon no help nor expect to see a white face again until they had unriddled the secret of the West, and heard the crash of breakers on the shores of the Pacific.

The party was soon gathered together. Lewis was a captain in the United States army, a Virginian and a distant connexion of Washington; Clark, another Virginian, was an officer of the militia. Their party consisted of forty-five men, all able frontiersmen, enlisted as regular soldiers so that the two commanders had a sort of military discipline over them. Of these forty-five, however, sixteen went only as far as what is now Dakota, and then returned, so that the actual expedition really consisted of but twenty-nine men—and one Shoshone squaw, Sacagewa, who, with her French-Canadian husband, Chaboneau, and her papoose, trudged the whole weary way across the Continent and back,

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cooking, interpreting, making peace with Indians, and over and over again proving herself invaluable.

During the early months of 1804 the expedition gathered together its stores and made the final arrangements at a camp on the Wood River, at St. Louis; and when the long winter ended and the melting snow filled every river and stream to its banks with ice-cold water, the final steps for departure were taken. The first stage was to be up the swift and muddy current of the Missouri, with its snags and sandbars, its dangers from roaring winds and worse dangers from fierce and hostile Redskins.

The means of transport were three boats. A keel-boat, 55 ft. long, with a large square sail and twenty-two oars; and two pirogues, or open boats, 40 or 50 ft. long, and about 12 ft. in beam, propelled by oars. The keel-boat was a large craft. She drew 3 ft. of water, and had a forecastle and cabin, and was partly fortified, to resist attack from the shore. She was mostly towed up stream, though on occasions they punted her along the shallow banks with great poles. What with sailing, rowing, or punting, the party usually made some dozen or fifteen miles a day up stream.

The pirogues were loaded with all the stores required for the long journey, as well as bales of presents for the Indians—beads, looking-glasses, knives, paints, and such other things as were likely to catch the Red Man's fancy.

On 3rd May, the last great block of ice had gone bumping down the Missouri, and at 4 p.m. the next day Lewis gave the order to start.

Progress up the Missouri was slow. Spring rains, a fierce current and unexpected sandbanks made navigation dangerous, especially with the heavily laden boats and the slippery banks from which they were being towed. Much hunting of deer had to be done, too, for the expedition was largely self-supporting in the matter of meat. Sometimes they met rafts floating down the river, laden



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with furs and tallow, the trade of solitary trappers in remote forests, on the way to St. Louis.

And so, for seven hundred miles, they crept on against the swollen current, and over two months passed in a monotony only broken by such incidents as adventures with poisonous snakes or occasional elk-hunts. Indians were seen but rarely, for they were mostly out on the plains, hunting bison; but late in July the pioneers found themselves in the heart of the Red Man's country.

As soon as he could Captain Lewis called together a council of the Ottoe and Missouri Indians, and announced to them that the King of France was no longer their Great Father, but that the President of the United States had gathered them into his family. Presents were distributed, guns fired, ceremonial pipes of peace smoked, the six chiefs were given medals, and the council broke up with many protestations of friendship on each side. This was at Council Bluffs, near the present city of Omaha.

Now followed many more weary miles up the great river. Summer passed, the rains of autumn began to pelt down heavier, the cold became more marked and snow even began to fall. Towards the end of October the explorers arrived at the first big Indian encampment, that of the Mandans, where they decided to make their winter quarters. Accordingly, they set to work at building a log fort and preparing for the hard, cold winter that soon set in. Friendly relations were established with the Indians, a good supply of food was collected. Day after day they went out buffalo-hunting, for the herds of those great beasts, now almost extinct, at that time blackened the face of the prairies.

As spring approached, preparations began for the continuation of the voyage. The boats, which had lain all the winter encased in ice, were cut out, drawn up on the banks and overhauled, and on the 7th of April the expedition started off once more towards the west.

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It was a strange land through which the river now led them, past buttes and hills, bluffs and cliffs, richly and warmly coloured, and broken by immense tracts of prairie land or depths of forest. A week after their departure they passed the highest point on the Missouri yet visited by white men, and from thence onward the voyage was one of pure discovery.

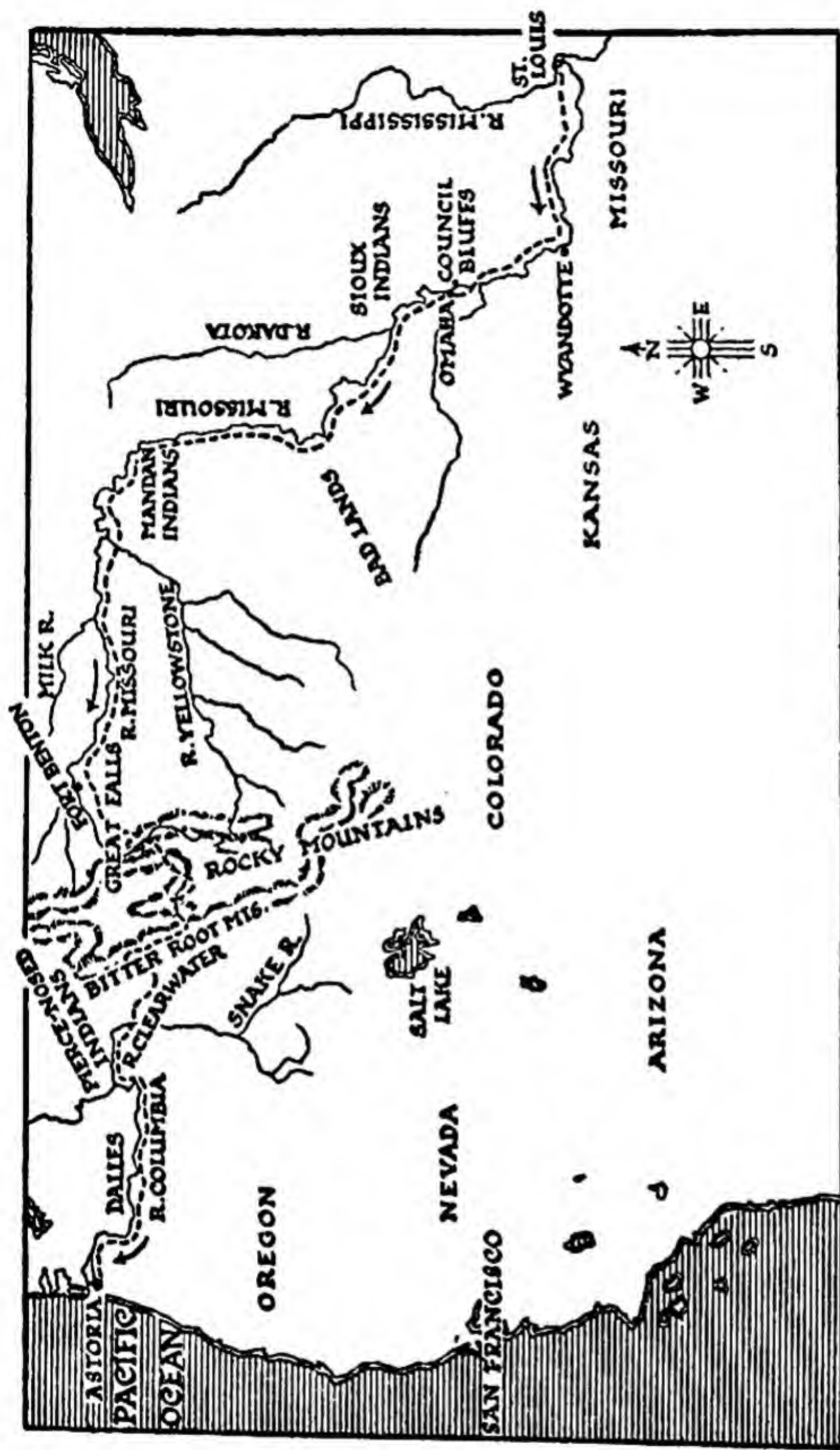
It was a land of bears they had come to, and many were the exciting fights they had with the huge beasts. One evening six men had just landed from a canoe when they came across a huge brown bear. Four of them fired and each lodged a shot in his lungs. This maddened the great creature, who sprang up and dashed after the hunters, his mouth and jaws foaming with pain and rage. Two of them fired and wounded him again, but he was upon them before they could reload, and they had to throw away their arms and leap down a high bank into the canoe for safety. The bear sprang after them, and actually plunged into the water a few feet from the rearmost man. Just in time one of the hunters on shore shot him through the head and killed him.

On and on they went, now between sandy banks and then into the depths of cañons where the cliffs rose two or three hundred feet sheer from the water. Sometimes they came to forks where other rivers flowed in, and much time had to be spent in discovering which was really the parent Missouri.

For scores of miles passing Indians had been telling Lewis and Clark of a great waterfall they would come to on the Missouri, but as mile after mile was traversed and the very lie of the country seemed contrary to any such feature, the explorers abandoned the idea as founded on nothing better than Indian fancy.

But one morning, as Lewis and a party of his men were prospecting over the vast plain that seemed to roll to the very feet of the snow-capped Rockies, which





Map showing the route taken by Lewis and Clark in their journey across the North American Continent.

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lay, as it were, at the edge of the world, a distant rumble caught their ears. Presently a cloud of spray, like a column of smoke, rose for an instant above the plain, sparkled in the sun, and then dispersed into nothing.

Towards this point they now made with all haste. As they advanced the noise grew louder and louder, and could be mistaken for nothing other than the roar of some giant waterfall. But they had to travel seven miles after hearing the first sound before they found themselves at the foot of these giant falls where the Missouri, sweeping down from the Rockies, makes a mad leap of 90 feet, amid spray and foam and thunder.

So the stories of the Indians had been true after all!

Wonderful as they were, the falls of the Missouri presented a problem. How were they to be passed? Clearly the only thing to be done was to carry the boats up to the higher level, so Captain Clark set about to find a good portage.

As soon as he had established a line the whole party set to work on the hard task before them. A cottonwood tree was felled—a big fellow, 22 inches in diameter—and from this were sawn a number of wheels which were attached to rough wagons on which the boats were hauled. These rude carts had to be dragged by hand over eighteen miles of uneven country, abounding in prickly-pear, and across ground that had been trampled by buffaloes when it was wet and had since dried into hard, sharp points that bruised the feet of the men, shod as they were with nothing but moccasins.

Thirteen days it took—about a mile and a half a day—and the wonder is they ever managed it, for one thing after another seemed to conspire against them. If it was not heat, prickly-pears or bears, then it was hail, cloudbursts or unexpected accidents. In some parts they hoisted the sails and let the wind help the canoes along on their cottonwood wheels.

On Saturday—it was 9th June—Captain Clark,



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Sacagewa and Chaboneau were overtaken by a cloud-burst, and crept into a ravine for shelter from the deluges of water that fell from the sky. Hardly had they been ensconced there a few minutes before what seemed a huge tidal wave was upon them. It was the flood caused by the cloud-burst, bearing before it rocks, mud, and tree-trunks. Clark had just time to drag the squaw on to a jutting piece of rock, to which Chaboneau struggled a second later. In another moment all three would have been swept before this flood into the raging waters of the Missouri.

Perhaps the greatest trouble they had at this time was from bears. These clumsy yet curiously agile beasts harried the men day and night, great brown bears that seemed equally at home in the rivers and on the rocks. Sometimes the huge brutes actually raided the camp and sent the men scrambling up trees or hiding behind rocks until someone could get a gun and do a little useful shooting.

They were now getting near to the huge range of the Rocky Mountains, whose glistening snow-peaks were ever before their eyes. The lands of the buffalo would soon be left behind, and the food question would assume serious proportions, for the party of thirty-two ate at the rate of one buffalo every four-and-twenty hours.

At last, one silent evening, the canoes swept round a bend of the river and they found themselves in that most wonderful, perhaps, of all American scenery, the Gates of the Rockies. This is a terrific cañon, nearly six miles long, on each side of which the mountains rise twelve hundred feet perpendicularly from the water's edge. The river is a hundred and fifty yards wide at this spot, and of immense depth, and seems to have hewn its way by sheer force through this marvellous gateway. A few days later they came to Three Forks, where the Madison, Jefferson and Gallatin Rivers unite to form the Missouri.

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Of these rivers Lewis chose the Jefferson, up which they poled and shoved their canoes, sometimes dragging them over the stones when the water was too shallow to float them, at others finding the punt-poles would reach no bottom, so deep was the stream.

All this time they had met scarcely any Indians, though on several occasions either Lewis or Clark had left the main body of the expedition to search for them. The few Redskins they had seen, far from flying at them with war-whoop and tomahawk, had invariably fled. But as they crossed the Rockies, a party of the Shoshonees was encountered, who hastily painted their cheeks red as a sign of friendship, and made them welcome. It was a greasy reception, for the warriors were smeared thickly with fat and vermillion, and each of them rubbed his left cheek against those of the white men, crying: "Ah hi e, ah hi e!" (I am much pleased).

A pipe of peace was then lighted and smoked solemnly, while Lewis eagerly collected all the information he could as to the land they had reached. He learned that the river they were now on, instead of flowing into the Missouri as he had imagined, swept away to the west and joined a great stream, the Salmon, and thence flowed into the Great Lake—the Pacific. So he had crossed the Divide, the line that practically separates two hemispheres. It was a great moment!

As soon as he could, without offending his Indian friends, Lewis began to move down the mountain slopes that now trended westward. On the way they met Sacagewa's people, who received her with delight, and listened eagerly to the stories she had to tell of the great white men with whom she had been so long.

The explorers had now come to one of the roughest and wildest parts of the whole American Continent. The rivers ran in tremendous cañons, the mountains



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were steep and rugged, covered everywhere with dense forests, and snow lay thickly.

There was not a day to be lost, for by the time they had crossed the Great Divide it was well into August, the days were shortening, and the ocean was a long way off. The Indians had told them that the Salmon River, though leading to the Great Lake—as they called the Pacific Ocean—was impassable, and after a few expeditions they found this was so. But the Shoshonee Indians were full of other information, and acting upon what could be made out of their involved stories, Lewis and Clark directed their course northwards across some heavy mountain country to a river called the Bitter Root.

It was an old Indian trail they followed, but so little used and so overgrown that they had to hew their way through the underbrush and trees. Here they met with the Flathead Indians, who had never before seen a single Paleface. The Flatheads, suspicious and puzzled at first to account for these strange visitors, ended by receiving them in friendly guise, and eventually supplied them with food and horses.

But there was no time to be spent in cultivating the friendship of Indians, and with as little delay as possible the party pushed on down the Bitter Root until they reached a Creek they called Travellers' Rest.

Here they rested a day or two, for the time had come to make another bid to cross the mountains and strike due west for the ocean. Besides, the Indians refused to guide them, not from ill-will, but from sheer lack of interest. However, they could follow the Indian road—called the Lolo Trail—which was marked by pine-trees whose bark had been peeled off.

On the 13th September some curious hot springs were passed, and soon afterwards the explorers found themselves in a rough and rocky country which made the previous hardships of their journey seem pure comfort in

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comparison. An old Shoshonee Indian, who professed to know the way, accompanied them, but his knowledge of the trails was very slight, and the explorers had to rely more upon the compass than upon his lore.

A great trail like the Lolo is something like a main-line railway, here and there tracks lead off or the trail seems to fork, and then it is difficult to know which is the main route. To add to their troubles, when the guide had taken them high up into the mountains snow began to fall heavily, and so covered the trail that the only way to follow it was by observing the branches of the trees which, being low, showed signs of having been rubbed by passing Indians on horseback.

Food was now becoming a problem, and short rations were making some of the men sick. A few pheasants, an occasional prairie wolf, and one day a horse, helped to fill the larder, and many a time they thought of the buffalo steaks and haunches of venison they had so thoughtlessly enjoyed on the other side of the Rockies.

At last the country changed and a stretch of prairie lay before them, peopled by friendly Chopunnish Indians who gave them of their best. Twisted-Hair, the chief, made a feast of dried salmon, and welcomed Lewis and Clark solemnly to the land where his tribe had been overlords from time immemorial.

But better than all Indian welcomes or feasts of fried salmon was the change in their surroundings. The last ridges of the snowy, cheerless Rockies were left behind; in front lay the open prairies, across which blew pleasant warm breezes, and where herds of game were to be seen. Yet more than this, even, was the broad water-way that stretched westward, the Kooskooskie River, as the Indians called it, the south branch of the Clearwater River which itself flows into the Columbia and was to take them direct to the Pacific Ocean.



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Before they could start on this, which was to prove the final stage of their journey, much overhauling of canoes had to be done; so they settled in Canoe Camp along with two Indian chiefs and their squaws. Five boats had to be made, with axe and adze, much shooting was necessary, and the invalids, of whom there were many, had to be restored. But work went on so well that after little more than a fortnight they were able to start off down the river.

It was exciting going at times, for unexpected rocks were encountered where the canoes struck so suddenly and with such violence that the crews had to jump out, wade ashore and repair their craft. Indians were prowling about on either bank. There was much council-holding and giving of presents and sitting interminable hours smoking pipes of peace.

Very fierce some of the Pierced-Nose Indians looked, as they peered out upon the Palefaces passing by in their canoes. They wore buffalo- or elk-skin robes, decorated with beads, shells and mother-of-pearl. Their heads were adorned with high feathers, and their faces painted white, green and blue, diversified with hideous lines of orange and scarlet. But they were friendly enough, and glad to receive the parcels of beads and the guns that Lewis and Clark presented to them.

The journey of the explorers was now uneventful, except for the frequent wrecking of the canoes. From the Indians they obtained dogs—almost the only meat that could be got without going far from the river on hunting expeditions—fish and roots.

When they actually reached the Columbia River they were received by the Indians in a great pow-wow. About two hundred Pierced-Nose warriors surrounded them in a circle, stamping in time to the rhythm of a drum, and droning out a song which none could understand. Then followed hours of silent pipe-smoking and inspection of presents.

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It was on the 18th October that the party turned the prows of their canoes into the Columbia, the Great River of the West. Every mile the water highway now took them they penetrated further and further into the Red Man's country. Most of the Indians they met fled at sight of the explorers, but in the end Sacagewa, the faithful squaw, was always able to restore confidence.

Occasionally they came to rapids and falls which had to be avoided by laborious portage, but this was easier than the great portage at the Missouri, for it was usually a matter of some hundreds of yards, and the Indians were delighted to help in exchange for a few beads or shells. There was no dearth of food either, for the Columbia is the most prolific salmon river in the world, and in places the great fish almost jostled one another out of the water.

One day, to their surprise, the swift and easy passage of the river suddenly checked, and they found themselves forced upon one of the most tricky pieces of inland navigation in the world. The river opened into a largish lake, the further side of which seemed absolutely blocked by a high black rock. At the same time an ominous roaring of water struck their ears, and the current began to quicken beneath the boat.

Very cautiously Lewis worked his canoe nearer, until the cause of the noise was apparent. After spreading itself out in this lake to a width of four hundred yards, the river was suddenly constricted to a bare forty-five yards, and through this funnel it dashed with incredible speed and fury. Portage was impossible, for the great rock was insurmountable; so there was nothing for it but to shoot the rapids, and this they did, to the amazement of the Indians who stood on either bank to watch them. Thus they crossed the far-famed Dalles of the Columbia.

As the great river was sweeping them ever nearer



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the ocean, they began to see signs of white men. One day an Indian visited them, wearing a sailor's round hat and a pea-jacket; another man they saw had a brass tea-kettle swinging from his robe, and a third was adorned with a piece of bright scarlet cloth. But no white men were actually met and the explorers had enough to do in navigating the river without scanning the shores too closely. For very soon they found themselves right on the Cascades, where the Columbia wheels suddenly at right angles from west to south, dashes down, at a steep angle, for some four hundred yards, and then turns abruptly round from south to west again. This they negotiated successfully, partly by portage, partly by sheer good boatmanship, though several of the canoes got a severe bumping.

And now their approach to the "Great Lake" was shown by the fact that they met with tidal water. The end was near, and the river became more than a mile in width, opening out to ten or twelve miles as they neared the ocean. They encountered strong headwinds, and the waves were often so high that the canoes, built for river traffic, were in constant danger of being swamped. But they pushed on, through storm and mist and rain, in the height of discomfort on account of the wet, not to mention sea-sickness, until at last they drew their canoes up on a sandy beach of the ocean, near a deserted Chinook village.

The great deed had been done! The vast American Continent had been crossed from East to West, and the route over which, in but a few years to come, a hundred trains a day would roar and thunder while passengers ate and slept and played cards, had been crossed with hardship and toil by a handful of intrepid men.

Lewis and Clark sought winter quarters along the coast, and finally picked on a spot they christened Fort Clatsop. There they recuperated and rested during the winter months, and laid new plans; for both men

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had long since resolved to return the way they came, and to extend their discoveries by following separate paths. This they did, and all arrived back safely in 1806. But their adventures cannot be recorded here, for with the arrival at Fort Clatsop their actual voyage of discovery ended.



## CHAPTER X

### Nansen and the North

**F**OR many centuries seamen and explorers cast longing eyes at the North Pole, that land of mystery which Nature seemed to decree should never be visited by man; and many a gallant sailor lost his life or broke his heart in the vain attempt to reach it. All sorts of things were imagined about this ice-enshrouded spot. Some thought it lay on a large continent, where, amongst other things, gold might be found; others held different theories; yet others had no theory at all, but simply wanted to get there.

It would take too long to tell of all the endeavours to reach the Pole, so in this chapter will be related the story of Fridtjof Nansen's famous voyage in 1893, when, though he only reached  $86^{\circ} 28' N.$ , or some 190 miles short of the Pole, he discovered that, instead of the enchanted spot being on land, it is an ice-covered sea, and once and for all proved the futility of risking life and limb in actually reaching it.

Since Nansen's voyage two men have claimed that they have reached the Pole: Dr. Cook, an experienced Arctic traveller, who made the attempt in 1907, but was discredited upon his return; and the American explorer, Peary, who went there in 1909.

No doubt of any sort can dim the magnificent endeavour of Nansen, and it is his story that we will now tell.

Fridtjof Nansen, the great Norwegian explorer, had already done much for Arctic exploration by his intrepid crossing of Greenland in 1888, when, with five sledges

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and six companions, he traversed that snowbound continent from East to West on ski and made valuable observations in every branch of science. He was thus well equipped with knowledge and experience for the great scheme which occurred to him, and which he put into action.

In 1881, an Arctic vessel, called the *Jeannette*, was caught in the ice near the Liakhov Islands on the north coast of Siberia, and crushed to pieces. Three years later portions of her wreckage were found on the coast of Greenland, which lay on the diametrically opposite side of the Pole. This gave Nansen the germ of his idea. Why not force a vessel into the pack on the Siberian side and let her be carried across the Polar Ocean by the ice, like these portions of wreckage had been?

Experts smiled at the idea. But, like all men who know their job thoroughly, Nansen could afford to let the experts smile, and quietly went on with his plans and schemes. Every item of the equipment, down to the smallest detail, was thought out and designed by himself, and when he put his plans before the men who had promised him money and support, they realized that here was a man who was bound to succeed, if success was possible.

The most important thing to be considered was the vessel that was to carry out this daring scheme. Mr. Colin Archer, of Laurvik, a Norwegian of Scottish parents, who had spent his life designing boats for Arctic waters, built a stout ship called the *Fram*, so designed that as the ice-pressure increased she should rise up, instead of being nipped. Her sides were 2 ft. thick, and the beams in her stern were 4 ft. of solid oak. She was given a triple-expansion engine and rigged as a three-masted fore-and-aft schooner. Every line of her was designed so that she should "slip like an eel out of the embraces of the ice."

The crew of twelve was then selected. Otto Sverdrup



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(an experienced Arctic mariner who had accompanied Nansen in his dash across Greenland), was appointed master; Sigurd Scott-Hansen, lieutenant in the Norwegian Navy, was taken as navigator and observer; Dr. Blessing as the surgeon. The rest were reliable men whom Nansen knew personally, or who had been specially recommended for the voyage.

The first move in the expedition was made by Baron von Toll, a friend of Nansen, who sailed to the New Siberia Islands, in May, 1893, and established there a depôt containing provisions for a month.

Amid much enthusiasm the *Fram* weighed anchor in July, and on the 29th of the month picked up the selected pack of dogs from Khabarova, in Pett Strait. She then coasted along Siberia as far as the New Siberia Islands, and on September 16th set a course northward. Nine days later she was caught in the ice and fairly frozen in. Nothing now remained to do but let her be carried by the drifting ice whither it listed.

Nothing, that is, so far as the *Fram* herself was concerned. But there was plenty of work for the crew. A house was built of ice, where Scott-Hansen made his scientific observations; a continual round of small duties was organized to keep anyone from being idle; and at regular intervals throughout the day and night, deep-sea soundings and temperatures at various depths were taken.

The first great pressure of the floe was felt about a month after the *Fram* had been frozen in. Great ridges of ice piled up alongside the vessel, cracking against her sides and at times overtopping the bulwarks. As the winter advanced the pressure became so great that Nansen made all preparations to abandon his ship; but her lines had been so well designed that she slipped out of the cold and fatal embrace of the ice and rode safely.

The long, dark Arctic winter fell, and was succeeded by the short light summer. By the time the *Fram* had

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been locked in the ice a year she had only travelled 189 miles in a northerly direction. Winter fell again, with its interminable dreariness, and every little detail of the daily routine acquired importance to relieve the monotony.

It was now that Nansen determined to make a bold dash for the Pole. He decided to take only one companion, leaving the ship to continue the voyage under Sverdrup's command. After very careful consideration, for upon his choice rested the entire success of the venture, he selected Frederik Hjalmar Johansen. They were to take three sledges and twenty-eight dogs, carrying two kayaks on the sledges to negotiate the lanes of open water that were sure to be encountered. Double sleeping-bags, a tent, a rather elaborate Primus cooking-stove, pemmican, fish-flour, dried boiled potatoes, pea-soup, butter, chocolate, and biscuit, formed the stores.

After two false starts, from which they had to return owing to minor accidents, Nansen and Johansen set out on 14th March, 1895, to the accompaniment of a thundering salute from the *Fram*. Sverdrup and some of the others accompanied them a short way, but before long even they were left behind, and the two adventurers found themselves alone in the unknown world of ice, where they and the dogs were to wander for many months to come.

The going was very hard. Ice was often piled up in ridges, across which the sledges had to be helped and sometimes carried; it frequently chanced that they capsized, and could only be turned right way up after a world of pushing and hauling. The average day's journey was nine miles, though it seemed more like ninety by the time they pulled up for the evening halt at six o'clock.

As they got further away from the *Fram* the ice began to improve and each day's journey lengthened out to fourteen miles or more. Now and then, of course, some mischance would hold them up—as, for instance, when



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a sharp spike of ice ripped a hole in the sack of fish-flour, and more than an hour had to be spent in collecting the precious stuff. On another occasion the odometer—an instrument they had constructed for measuring the distance run by the sledges—got broken in some rough ice and had to be adjusted by fingers stiff with cold.

But onwards they went, ever northwards, often across boundless ice-plains that appeared to stretch away to infinity. Sometimes the ice was piled so high that the hummocks were more like hills. This was evidently old ice that had been drifting for years, partially melted by the sun in summer, and frozen up again with fresh snow when winter set in.

It was while they were contending against this sort of travelling that they lost the odometer again, and did not miss it until it was too late to go back and search, so, from now onwards, the daily run was largely a matter of guess-work. The same day that this happened, one of the dogs named Livjaegeren fell ill, and being unharnessed from the team, dropped behind so far that Nansen had to go a long way back to find him.

Meanwhile the cold was getting worse, and their clothes became like suits of armour in the daytime, and wet bandages at night. The sleeping-bags, too, got heavier from the moisture which froze on the inside hair.

Ten days after they had left the *Fram* the ice began to get worse, and only a bare seven miles a day could be done, what with the continual lifting of the heavy sledges and helping the dogs. Livjaegeren was so bad that he had to be killed and skinned, a disagreeable job in the biting cold wind that had set in. The meat was given to the other dogs, who ate it greedily after their long day's toil.

So worn out were the two men that sometimes they

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would drop asleep as they pushed the sledges, to be rudely awakened by suddenly falling forward on their snowshoes. Then a halt would be called, and the whole party, men and dogs, took shelter from the wind behind a hummock or ridge of ice.

It was Johansen's job to see to the animals while Nansen filled the cooker with ice and got supper in train. One day this would be rissoles made of fish-meal, flour and butter; another day it was a stew of pemmican and dried potatoes; or variety would be sought in a piping hot meal of pea-soup.

As soon as the dogs were settled and the little camp made ship-shape, the sleeping-bags were spread out in the tent, the door carefully shut, and the two tired men crept into their bags to thaw out their clothes—a nasty job, for they would lie at least an hour and a half in the bags before feeling the least warmth, when their clothes would become soppy with the melted moisture of the day.

At last came supper, the most glorious moment of the twenty-four hours, though they were often so tired that they fell back asleep with the spoons raised to their lips. Finally they snuggled deep into their bags, buckled the flap over their heads, rolled as close to one another as was possible, and fell into a deep slumber, too often only to live the whole weary day again in dreams.

Warmer weather came on 31st March, with a south wind, and now the ice began to melt. Lanes of water appeared which had to be negotiated or gone round, and travelling became harder than ever. There was monotony enough in their going. The only break was when one or other of them would indulge in an involuntary bath, falling into water that was scarcely above freezing-point.

By 6th April, they were making only four miles a day. Everywhere were ridges and endless rough ice,



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like broken rocks, that defied the sledges and wore out both dogs and men. Two days later Nansen seriously considered the situation. Progress was impossible; and when he clambered to the top of a lofty hummock to view the surroundings, he could see nothing but a veritable chaos of ice-blocks stretching into the distance as far as the eye could reach.

They were now at Lat.  $86^{\circ} 13' N.$ , nearer the North Pole than any man had ever yet set foot. It was tempting to have got so far and yet be able to go no farther, but to push on would have been a useless risking of their lives, and possibly throwing away all the value of what they had already done. So camp was made, and the occasion celebrated by a banquet of stew, bread and butter, chocolate and stewed whortleberries. In the good commonsense this hearty meal promoted all thoughts of the useless dash to the Pole were abandoned.

It was one of the cold ironies of the North that as soon as they changed their course and began the return the ice got better, the impassable hummocks gave place to wide fields of fairly smooth ice, and travelling became almost a pleasure. This was largely due to the fact that with their new course they were running parallel to the ridges instead of having to cross them. But the cold was still very severe, and while Johansen was looking after the dogs, Nansen had no enviable task, as he lay thawing in his bag with frozen clothes and shoes, in working out observations, or turning up logarithm tables with tender, frost-bitten fingers and aching bones.

Checking the distance they had covered by his observations, he was amazed to find that the two did not tally, and that progress south was by no means so regular as it ought to have been. Only when he realized that they were on moving ice, ice that was drifting rapidly northward, did he come to the explanation of this curious phenomenon which at first alarmed him.

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On Easter Day the warmth set in. The sun grew quite unpleasantly hot, and after the fierce cold through which they had been travelling, both men were almost overcome with exhaustion. No more frozen bags and thawing clothes! They were even able to sit in the sun and patch their much-worn trousers!

Meanwhile, as the weight on the sledges grew less, the dogs were being steadily killed to feed their companions. It was not a pleasant job, slaughtering the friends who had worked so hard for them, but the North is cruel, whatever way you look at it.

Pleasant as the warmth was, it brought its own problems, for the ice now began to melt, and turn where they would great lanes of water blocked the way. But in the clear fields of ice they made good progress, and land and home seemed to grow hourly nearer as the black days of the North receded far away.

On 26th April they saw the track of an animal in the snow. A fox had been there. Did it mean that they were nearing land? How had this creature got so far north? All was excitement and every rise in the ice meant a searching gaze to the horizon for some sign of solid rock.

Yet day after day went by, and still the vast ice-sea, broken up into great lanes of open blue water, stretched before them. Sometimes narwhals thrust their great heads up through the water, and occasionally tracks of bears were seen. Travelling became increasingly difficult, owing to the constant water lanes, and hours would often be spent finding some means of crossing them.

Dogs and men were now so exhausted that progress was becoming a serious problem. The elusive land seemed as far away as ever. Luckily there was little fear of starvation, for seals and whales were to be had by very little skill in harpooning, and towards the end of May birds began to appear.



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Travelling on the sledges had now become almost impossible, so with the beginning of June Nansen and Johansen set to work getting the kayaks seaworthy, for they had got sadly knocked about in the long journey on the sledges. It was a ticklish job, for the frail craft had to be handled tenderly lest in repairing a rib or mending a rent some worse damage were done. When the great lanes were reached the kayaks were launched, the sledges lashed across them, and thus the baggage and dogs, of which only five now remained, were ferried across.

Presently a seal was shot and camp was pitched for a good rest, with plenty of fresh food. But this was the cause of an accident, for one day the blubber oil caught fire while some steaks were being fried, and blazed up in a sheet of flame that burned a hole in the tent. Luckily Nansen was near enough to stamp it out and the hole had to be repaired with a sledge sail.

So June went by, with never a sight of land. Daily dragging the sledges forward so long as the ice lasted, and then a troublesome ferrying over a long dark channel of water, and on with the sledges again! Day after day and week after week! By 10th July, only two dogs, Kaifas and Suggen were left. Kaifas did them a good turn, for one evening, as Nansen was cooking the supper, he heard a barking and growling outside, and, thrusting his head out of the tent door, came face to face with a large bear. Quick as thought he snatched a rifle and managed to wound her. As she hurried off two cubs lumbered up and followed their mother, who was barely able to crawl away. They were both quickly despatched, and once again the little party was well stocked with fresh food.

It was not until 24th July, after two months of hourly expectation, that land was actually sighted—two years since they had set eyes on anything rising above the unbroken rim of the horizon, a white line that

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for countless ages had stretched over this lonely sea, and will stretch over it for how many ages to come? No frowning cliff nor bold headlands betokened their approach to solid earth, just a few black rocks thrusting their tips above the waste of snow. But none the less—land!

The ice now grew worse with every yard they travelled. It was as if some giant had hurled down enormous blocks pell-mell and had strewn wet snow between them, with water underneath. Endless toil and misery were needed to traverse a few yards, and to add to the discomfort dense mists frequently rolled up, shutting out everything at a short distance.

Early one morning they were resting after an exhausting bit of work. Nansen was holding his sledge to prevent it slipping into the water when he heard Johansen shout, "Take the gun!" He turned round instantly to find Johansen on his back, wrestling with an enormous bear.

The great beast had crept up behind him, and when he was not looking dealt him a terrific blow on the head which made him see ten thousand stars. At first he tried to defend himself with his fists, then he managed to seize the animal by the throat and hold fast until Nansen was ready to come to his aid.

Nansen snatched at his rifle, but as he did so the kayak slid off into the water. He was frantically reaching out for it when Johansen said very quietly, "You must look sharp if you want to be in time!"

At last Nansen got hold of the butt-end of his gun, dragged it clear, spun round in a sitting posture, and let fly at the bear, giving it a good dose of shot behind the ear. Next moment the beast rolled over between them.

A few days more and all such adventures, together with the hardships of the last many months, were forgotten by the two travellers, for they stood on the ice



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by the edge of the open sea that heaved before them with its white floes and bergs—the great waterway that was the only path to lead them home! They waved their caps enthusiastically, and celebrated the occasion in right royal style by munching a bar of chocolate apiece.

The kayaks were now lashed together with the sledges athwart them, and all preparations made for a voyage. The two remaining dogs were killed, Nansen shooting Johansen's and *vice versa*, for they had grown attached to the beasts with which they had shared so many trials and troubles.

It was sheer delight to glide over the water, under sail, after dragging the sledges so many weary months over so many difficulties. Not that travelling was without its dangers, as was shown one morning when suddenly an enormous head thrust itself out of the water by the side of the kayak and a huge walrus stared at them, threatening at any moment to drive his huge tusks through the frail craft.

Both men seized their guns, but the walrus dived, only to reappear a moment later on the other side. The beast was evidently angry, for he snorted so fiercely that the air shook, and he rolled on his side as though to rip open their little craft from below. When he made his next visit to the surface, however, Johansen dealt him a hefty blow with his paddle, full in the face, and with a loud bellow the great beast sank into the water, and did not venture near them again.

At last, on 14th August, they set foot on land for the first time for two years, and enjoyed a good night's rest on solid granite, thankful to lie on something that did not melt beneath them during the night. The land they struck was Houen's Island, on the northern coast of Franz Joseph Land. But the lie of the coast was wholly unknown to either Nansen or his companion, and as they paddled along by the edge of the ice to-

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wards a headland to the west, the great question arose—would the coast beyond it trend south or would it stretch on and on, westward? If the former, it meant home ere many months were passed; if the latter, they would have to winter on the land nearby and wait for the next spring weather.

At last they reached the towering Cape, and to their joy saw the coast receding beyond it towards the south-west. Westward stretched mile upon mile of blue water.

But for all this they were not destined to reach home that summer. Bad weather set in towards the end of August, the ice closed in before a cutting sea wind, in face of which it was impossible to force the kayaks, and on 28th August, Nansen regretfully decided that they would have to winter upon an island (subsequently called Frederick Jackson Island) on the south-west of Franz Joseph Land. So a stout hut was built of stones and moss, roofed with walrus hide. They lived on walrus meat—though on more than one occasion they had to fight for this against marauding bears—and made crude lamps, in which to burn the oil they got from the great brutes. So that if it had not been for the walruses they would have been in a pretty parlous state.

Month after month now passed in deadly monotony. Their clothes were too worn and tattered to allow them to go out into the winter cold for longer than was necessary; they had no means of amusing themselves save lying in the tent and talking, and there was little left to talk about, for two men who had already spent many months with no other company. Occasionally there would be tussles with bears, or the furious wind would threaten to carry the tent and kayaks bodily away. Sitting in the little smoky tent, they soon became as black as negroes, and nothing short of scraping their skin with a knife would remove even a fraction of the dirt.

In fact, there was nothing to do but sleep, and some-



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times they managed to pass twenty hours out of the twenty-four in dreams of home. When Johansen snored too badly, Nansen would kick him in the back, otherwise the time passed in silence and slumber. Towards spring provisions began to run short, but luckily a bear came along and a good shot from Johansen laid him out on the snow.

At last, on 19th May, 1896, after eight months of this dreary life, they were able to make a start for the south, dragging the kayaks on sledges. For a month they continued their way, now on the ice and now afloat. The walruses were very troublesome, and more than once threatened to sink the canoes, if not actually gore the men to death.

One day, when they were stiff with sitting in the kayaks, they landed and went ashore, leaving the canoes tied together and moored by one of the halliards. Suddenly Johansen, turning back for a moment, cried, "Look! The kayaks are adrift!"

They both ran down to the water's edge as fast as they could, but the boats had already drifted out of reach, and were fast getting further and further away.

"Here, take my watch!" called Nansen, and tossing off his coat he jumped into the icy water and swam after the kayaks, which were gathering speed with the wind behind them. Needless to say, he swam with all his might, for to have lost the kayaks meant certain death. The cold soon began to numb his limbs, but at last he managed to grab a projecting snow-shoe on the stern of one kayak and hauled himself aboard. Then he became so stiff with cold that he could scarcely paddle back, but so undaunted was he by this nearly fatal adventure that he managed to shoot a couple of auks on the way. It was long before Johansen was able to chafe his companion's limbs into any feeling again.

In the afternoon of 17th June, as Nansen was standing on a hummock watching the thousands of auks that

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fluttered round, he heard a curious sound, unlike any that had struck his ear for many a long day. It was repeated—it sounded like the bark of a dog! First single yaps and then a loud barking!

Johansen, who was near, refused to believe him. They listened, and sure enough, somewhere, far away over the ice, too far to be seen, in fact, dogs were barking lustily. Leaving Johansen to mind the kayaks, Nansen hurried off in the direction from which the sound had come. Presently he saw a figure advancing towards him, a well-dressed man in a check suit, rubber boots—a man immaculately shaven and clean, who started in some surprise at the filthy, black object that hastened to him with outstretched hand.

Nansen took it for granted—for it was over three years since he had seen a stranger—that the newcomer, who was none other than Jackson, in charge of his Arctic expedition, would recognize him. But it was some time before the Englishman exclaimed: "Aren't you Nansen?"

All was now well, and their troubles and discomforts were at an end. Jackson put them up in his splendid camp, where they lacked no luxuries, and by August they got back to Norway, where the *Fram*, after an adventurous voyage, arrived but a few days later.

The drift of the *Fram* worked out much as Nansen had hoped, and the scientific results of the expedition exceeded all his expectations. Nansen's journey Farthest North was, indeed, of more value than all previous or subsequent attempts to reach the Pole put together.



## CHAPTER XI

### Vasco da Gama Finds the Sea Route to India

**B**ARTHOLOMEW DIAZ has sailed round the bottom of Africa; there must be a way to India that way. You must go and find it for me!"

It was in such terms as these that, in 1497, King Manuel of Portugal gave his orders for the discovery of a sea route to India, orders upon the fulfilment of which depended a new era in the world's history.

India, with its splendour, its fabulous wealth and mysterious wisdom had, of course, been known to the Western world since Roman times, but hitherto the only means of getting there had been by a long and dangerous land journey, every step of which was challenged by Turks, Arabs, Persians and many other infidel races. Tradition, too, told of Christian peoples to be found in the Far East. The discovery of India, as it practically amounted to, became almost as much a work of piety as a mere quest for gold and diamonds.

"What do you want here?" was asked of the first Portuguese sailor who set foot on Indian soil. "Christians and spices!" he answered, and it was with this as his watchword that Vasco da Gama set out in 1497 to discover the Old World, five years after Christopher Columbus had first set foot in the New.

King Manuel had spoken of Bartholomew Diaz. It is only fitting that we should mention him here, for though his voyage of discovery is not worth a chapter to itself, it must not pass unnoticed in a Book of Explorers; for he was the first man to sail round the Cape of Good Hope.

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Bartholomew Diaz de Novaes was one of the last of the great race of Portuguese seamen. In 1487 he was commissioned to continue the exploration begun by Diogo Cão, who had followed the western coast of Africa as far south as Cape Cross, and what is now known as Walvisch Bay. So in August of that year, Diaz set sail from the Tagus with three vessels, which coasted down as far as Cape Cross and then pursued their course into unknown waters. Diaz Point, named after the commander, and so called to this day, was reached, and there they set up a stone pillar, portions of which are still to be seen in the museums at Cape Town and Lisbon.

Scarcely had they rounded Diaz Point before a northerly gale whipped up behind them and for thirteen days bore them ever southwards, far beyond the Cape and into high latitudes that struck a chill of ice into the mariners. When the gale died down Diaz set a course east and north, and after much anxious watching from the masthead, land was sighted. This is what is now known as Mossel Bay, though he called it the Bay of Herdsmen, from the numbers of Hottentots who were seen on shore tending their herds.

All unaware that he had really rounded the southern extremity of Africa, Diaz sailed further east, until the changing lie of the coast, which now began to turn northward, convinced him of what he had done. He continued his voyage to what is now Great Fish River, and then, at the urgent demand of his crew, put about and started for home. A stiff gale and heavy seas off Table Mountain and its adjacent promontories made him call it Cabo Tormentoso—Cape Tempestuous, but this was soon changed to Cabo de Boa Esperança—Cape of Good Hope.

Little is really known of Diaz's voyage, beyond the details of his sailing rates and other nautical calculations; but it was in reality a most important event in history,





*Photo: Rischgitz*

VASCO DA GAMA  
*From an old print*





# Vasco da Gama goes to India

for it undoubtedly proved that far down, almost at the bottom of the world, as it seemed, a way lay round the southern end of Africa which must lead to India and the glorious Orient.

"Find it for me!" said King Manuel to Vasco da Gama.

At this time da Gama was a man of thirty-seven, who had been at sea for many years and had won a name for himself as an intrepid mariner and a skilled master of men. It was some time about June, 1497, that Manuel sent for him, gave him his commission, and handed him a splendid silken banner emblazoned with the Red Cross. He allotted for his use a fleet of four vessels.

The *Saint Raphael* and *Saint Gabriel* were sister ships of some 110 tons, built on purpose for this voyage to India by Bartholomew Diaz himself, who had in mind the stormy seas he had experienced in his own voyage ten years earlier. They had high castles fore and aft, and were low amidships. The foremast and mainmast were square rigged, the mizzen carried a large lateen, while the bowsprit, rising high and almost perpendicular from the great forecastle, itself carried a square sail. Staunch vessels they were, with strong bluff bows fit for forging through the great billows of the Southern Seas. Vasco da Gama hoisted his flag in the *Saint Gabriel*, and his elder brother, Paul, took command of the sister ship.

Besides these was a caravel called the *Berrio*, of 50 tons; and a large storeship, commanded by one Gonçalo Nuñez. The total strength of the crews amounted to 160 or 170 men, some of whom were convicts, shipped for the express purpose of undertaking any dangerous landing where the natives might betray hostility.

By the 7th July all was ready for sailing, and after a solemn procession to the riverside, near where their vessels were moored, the crew embarked in their boats

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and rowed out to the ships as they swung round with the tide. The soft breeze was in their favour, the great banner with its crimson Cross waved free, and from the low banks of the shore, thronged with those who had come to see the adventurers depart, rose and fell a thousand voices chanting the Litany. Amid cheers and songs the anchors were weighed, and as the great canvases bellied out to the wind, the adventurous fleet made way down the river, Eastward bound.

Bartholomew Diaz accompanied them in a caravel which was to take him to St. George da Mina, on the Gold Coast, where the king had given him a lucrative post in reward for past services. They all kept consort until the Canaries were reached, but there a thick fog caught them in its clutches and for a time the ships were separated, nor did the little flotilla assemble all together again until they reached the Cape Verd Islands. There Bartholomew Diaz left them, with words of encouragement, and perhaps a little envy in his heart at seeing these men sailing to the south, to reap, maybe, the reward of his own labours.

It was now that Vasco da Gama proved his genius and courage as a navigator. Hitherto all southward-going vessels had crept along the African coast, making the best they could of the cross-currents and treacherous winds that abound in the Gulf of Guinea. Diaz and Cão had both been badly battered by the furious gales that beat upon the south-west coast of Africa. So da Gama determined to brave the unknown Atlantic and make a semi-circular sweep to reach the Cape of Good Hope. Accordingly, soon after crossing the Equator, he set his course south-west and began a huge compass to the south Atlantic. The farthest point westward was reached in September, when the four vessels were little more than 500 miles from the coast of Brazil; thence they made a south-easterly course, circling through the unknown waters of the south Atlantic, where seals and



## Vasco da Gama goes to India

great whales were the only signs that there was any life in the world but themselves.

Great masses of seaweed floated past the *Saint Michael* on the 1st of November. Three days later land was sighted, and on the 7th the anchor went splashing to the bottom of a pleasant bay that da Gama christened St. Helena Bay. Ninety-six days had elapsed since they sailed from the Cape Verd Islands, and 4,500 miles of unknown sea had been traversed. It was the longest voyage that any man had yet made without sight of land—a third again as long as that of Columbus, when he crossed the Atlantic.

Da Gama decided to land at St. Helena Bay, and in the intervals of cleaning and careening the ships, which were covered with barnacles and weed after the long voyage, the men made friends with the Hottentots, who welcomed them gladly. Nor was everything they met quite strange, for, after the long silence of the ocean, they were delighted to see dogs that “barked like those of Portugal,” as one of them remarked. Some of the birds, too, were familiar, as they twittered among the trees.

As so often happened, however, quarrels arose after a time, and there was a brush with the natives; so on the 16th November da Gama weighed anchor and sailed southwards, ever keeping a strict watch for the first glimpse of the frowning mountains that should betoken their arrival off the Cape of Good Hope.

The captain had aboard with him some men who had sailed with Bartholomew Diaz, but he scarcely needed them to tell him when the vast bulk of Table Mountain hove in sight. All hands crowded the deck and yards to look at the great landmark, though they had ample opportunity for becoming familiar with it, for a head gale kept them plying off and on for four days, and not before the 22nd were they able to double the Cape of Good Hope.

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Shortly afterwards, the fleet dropped anchor in Mossel Bay, and a grand re-organization took place. The heavy storeship was emptied and broken up; her timber being burned in great fires upon the beach. This gave an opportunity for feasting the Hottentots, who brought fat oxen and fine buffaloes, and exchanged them for red caps and little harness bells. There was dancing, too, in the light of the great fires, and much jollification, in which da Gama did his part and danced as good a hornpipe as the best.

Thirteen days were spent in Mossel Bay, during which the ships were watered and the stores re-arranged; then they set sail, and, a week later, passed Great Fish River, which had been Bartholomew Diaz's farthest point. In spite of contrary currents a fair wind carried them on, and by Christmas Day they were abreast of a pleasant-looking land, which, in honour of the Nativity, da Gama called Natal.

Nothing of any importance happened during the next few days, though the weather was none too good. They passed what is now called Delagoa Bay, but did not land until they reached its northern extremity at the estuary of the Limpopo River, where the Bantu natives welcomed the three strange vessels with rejoicing, and supplied the men with fowls and as much fresh water as they could carry. Da Gama was so pleased with his reception that he called it "Terra a Boa Gente," Land of Good People. But he only stayed there a few days, and then sailed north again, and so passed from unknown waters into the southern limit of the African coast as it was then known to the Arabs.

But da Gama knew nothing of this. The whole land was strange, and the Arabs so rarely visited it that no sign of their civilization was sighted as the three little vessels pushed their way ever north.

Indeed, it was not until they landed in the mouth of the Kilimane River, late in January, that an encounter



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with two Bantu dandies, one decked out in a green cap and the other with a silken turban, revealed that they had left the realms of savagery and were now in touch with Eastern civilization. These two worthies were very haughty in their demeanour, and turned up their black noses at the presents da Gama offered them. They had seen great ships like his before, or rather had seen others who had seen them, and so refused to be impressed. Very superior black gentlemen they were indeed!

A whole month was spent at the Kilimane River repairing the damage done to masts and rigging by recent gales, cleaning the ships inside and out, watering and putting aboard fresh victuals. Scurvy broke out, too, and for a time more than half the crew were out of action. But on the 25th February they sailed again, and a week later made Mozambique.

As the three weather-worn Portuguese vessels entered the roadstead they found it bustling with activity, in strange contrast to the unbroken loneliness they had so long been accustomed to. There were four large ocean-going Arab craft lying there which had just crossed from India, laden with spices, gems, and gold, and their crews spun marvellous yarns to da Gama and his men, not only about the boundless wealth of the Indies, but concerning the wonders of the land they were then lying off and the inaccessible fastnesses of the interior, where Prester John reigned supreme over a large and wealthy race of black Christians—Abyssinians we now know them to have been.

Indeed, the Arabs and half-castes of Mozambique thought that all Christians were black, and took da Gama and his men for Mohammedans like themselves. Accordingly, when Mass was celebrated on shore on the first Sunday after their arrival, there was a wild uproar, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the Europeans were able to get to their boats and escape alive. Nor, despite their utmost efforts to patch things up again,

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would the local sheik permit them to land and fill their barrels with water. But da Gama was not the man to be crossed in his purposes. He adopted a firm attitude, backed with a little judicious gun practice, and made the Moslems give in at last. By the 29th March the fleet was able to set sail, ready for its lengthy voyage to an unknown port, across the Indian Ocean.

On Palm Sunday, which in that year fell on 7th April, they dropped anchor off Mombasa, but the inhabitants had already got wind that their visitors were Christians, and laid a deep plot to capture the vessels with their cargoes. It chanced that da Gama had on board a few negroes whom he had taken at Mozambique. It was they who gave him away, and it was due to their cunning that the people on shore had worked out a plan for his capture; so the captain had a quantity of whale oil brought to the boil, and extracted the secret of the plot from his negro guests.

Leaving Mombasa behind, the next port of call was Malindi, where they were received with a welcome that contrasted surprisingly with their usual reception. The Rajah sent them sheep, in exchange for which da Gama sent him an assorted present of coloured cloth, coral, a new hat, three washing-basins and a few tinkling bells. So flattered was the potentate with this mark of esteem that he came out in a boat next day to visit the ships, and though he would not put a foot on board, rowed about them, beneath the shelter of an enormous crimson umbrella. Salvoes of artillery were fired, and everybody parted on the very best of terms.

On the morning of the 2nd May, da Gama set sail, and having taken aboard an Indian pilot named Cana, set an east-north-east course for Calicut on the coast of Malabar.

For three weeks the fleet of three forged ahead across the Indian Ocean, a south-west breeze filling their canvas and speeding them on their way. On the 18th



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May the Laccadive Islands were sighted, and three days later the anchors were dropped in the roadstead of Calicut.

Ten months and a half had elapsed since da Gama had gone down with the tide from the river bank at Belem. He had passed a longer time afloat without sight of land than any other mariner; he had weathered the fury of the Cape of Good Hope, had found strange lands and stranger people up the East African Coast; and now, before his eyes, were the temples and waving trees of the great Eastern city! His object had been achieved; India had been reached by sea, not from the West—as the Spaniards had hoped to do, as Columbus thought he was doing—but from the East, and in that great half of the world that the Pope had given to Portugal.

The first thing da Gama did was to send one of the ex-convicts, who happened to speak Arabic fluently, in a small boat to the shore. As luck would have it, he had scarcely landed when a voice accosted him in perfect Spanish with, "What a nuisance you people are! What has brought you hither?"

In amazement he turned, to find himself face to face with a Moor from Oran, just across the sea from Spain, who had travelled to Calicut with his wares. "We have come to find Christians and spices!" answered da Gama's ambassador.

"I don't know anything about Christians," said the Moor, "but of spices you can have your fill; as for rubies and emeralds!" and he raised his hand to heaven as words failed him.

When Vasco da Gama went ashore himself, he began to realize that his mission would not be so easy in the land of splendour to which he had arrived. Along the barbarous or semi-barbarous shores of Africa his men in armour and the three imposing vessels in which they sailed had ensured a certain amount of respect;

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but here, in one of the most ancient lands of the world, which had flourished in a high state of civilization while Portugal was still overrun with gibbering savages, there was nothing to show his importance. It was all very well to talk bravely of the glories of Manuel's Court, the splendours of Lisbon, and the might of Portugal; all he had as evidence of this magnificence were three weather-worn ships, manned with rather tattered and scurvy-stricken men.

Da Gama and his crew were taken to Calicut with some show of state, however; for the populace were exceedingly curious to know who these white men might be, and what they wanted. They were ushered into the presence of the *Samuri*, or local Hindu governor, who received them with dignified graciousness and bade them welcome.

In accordance with custom his minister went next day to receive the gifts the stranger had brought as token of friendship. What was his amazement to find that the adventurers had come half round the globe to present a few washing-basins, corals, bells and glass gewgaws to the representative of the most cultured race in the world! Gold would have been acceptable, merely as a symbol, for the *Samuri* had more than he could do with; but to be insulted by a few bales of gifts that maybe a naked African monarch might have appreciated—this was too much! Somewhat crestfallen, da Gama and his men retired, with the gibes of the *Samuri* and his people rankling in their breasts.

There was nothing for it but to return to the ships, which were lying off Pandarani. Night had fallen when they reached the shore, a stiff wind was rising, and the boatmen flatly refused to carry the dogs of Christians out to their vessels; for the news of their poverty and foolishness had rapidly spread through the town, and the very scavengers laughed at them. Three days passed, and still they could not get away,



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and in the meanwhile they had to be kept under a strong guard to preserve them from the Mohammedans, who threatened them with death and tortures, and even spat elaborately whenever their name was so much as mentioned.

But at last da Gama got aboard his own vessels. After a hurried consultation with his principal officers, he sent ashore a load of such stuff as he thought might find a market. But there was not a thing the Portuguese brought but what the smallest householder in Calicut had better, and they could not sell so much as a knife. Not only that, but the *Samuri* demanded the payment of heavy dues on the paltry goods they had landed, dues amounting to well over £200, which was more than da Gama could have raised. Very haughtily he refused to pay this extortionate sum, and detained eighteen Hindus who happened to be on board when the demand was received.

Anxious to be rid of his visitors, the *Samuri* now made an arrangement for the return of the hostages, the Portuguese goods were again shipped aboard their own vessels, and a letter was given to da Gama certifying his arrival in India and promising to open up trade with King Manuel of Portugal. Having made these concessions he more than hinted at the advisability of da Gama's return to his own land, and on the 29th August the European vessels set sail.

The return to Portugal was marked by little except misfortune. Fierce gales prolonged the voyage across the Indian Ocean, and scurvy carried off thirty of the crew, many more of whom died at Malindi, where they put in on the 7th January, 1499. Near Mozambique the *Saint Raphael* was deserted and burned, for by now there were too few men left to navigate three ships.

Two months later the *Saint Gabriel* and the *Berrio* rounded the Cape and set their courses northward for home. On the way they parted company, and the

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*Berrio* reached Lisbon a couple of months before the admiral dropped anchor at Belem.

Two years had elapsed since Vasco da Gama had set sail, and now he was back with two vessels out of the four he had taken with him, and 52 men out of the 170 who had manned them. His brother Paul had died on the homeward journey, and his own health was sadly impaired, but the sea route to India had been discovered; the gate had been opened through which Portugal might pass and help herself to the fabulous wealth of the Orient.



## CHAPTER XII

### The Great Australian Desert: Stuart and Eyre

**F**OR a good many years after the discovery of Australia absolutely nothing was known of the interior of the vast island Continent. So few were its colonists, and so busy were they in establishing themselves firmly in the new country, that no one troubled to push further inland than fifty miles or so. What lay behind the mountains and forests was a mystery.

When exploration did begin, and that was during the early years of Queen Victoria's reign, men mostly kept to the districts about the south and east. The Macquarie and Darling Rivers were tracked from source to mouth, the Murrumbidgee and its adjacent lands were investigated, and one veteran pioneer, Captain Sturt, made his way northwards from the Darling to the very heart of the Continent, across a stony desert where the heat, at  $131^{\circ}$  F., and scorching winds, played havoc with the party. They could get no further than Lat.  $24^{\circ} 25'$  S. The great Australian desert beat them.

One of the members of Sturt's expedition was McDouall Stuart, who went as his draughtsman and chart-maker. The excitement and adventure of exploration appealed to him enormously, and some years after his return from the interior he found a friend in a certain Mr. William Finke who was willing to put up enough money to enable him to undertake an expedition on his account. In his first journey Stuart pushed into the interior, penetrated a considerable distance to the northward, had various brushes with the aboriginals and eventually made his way back to

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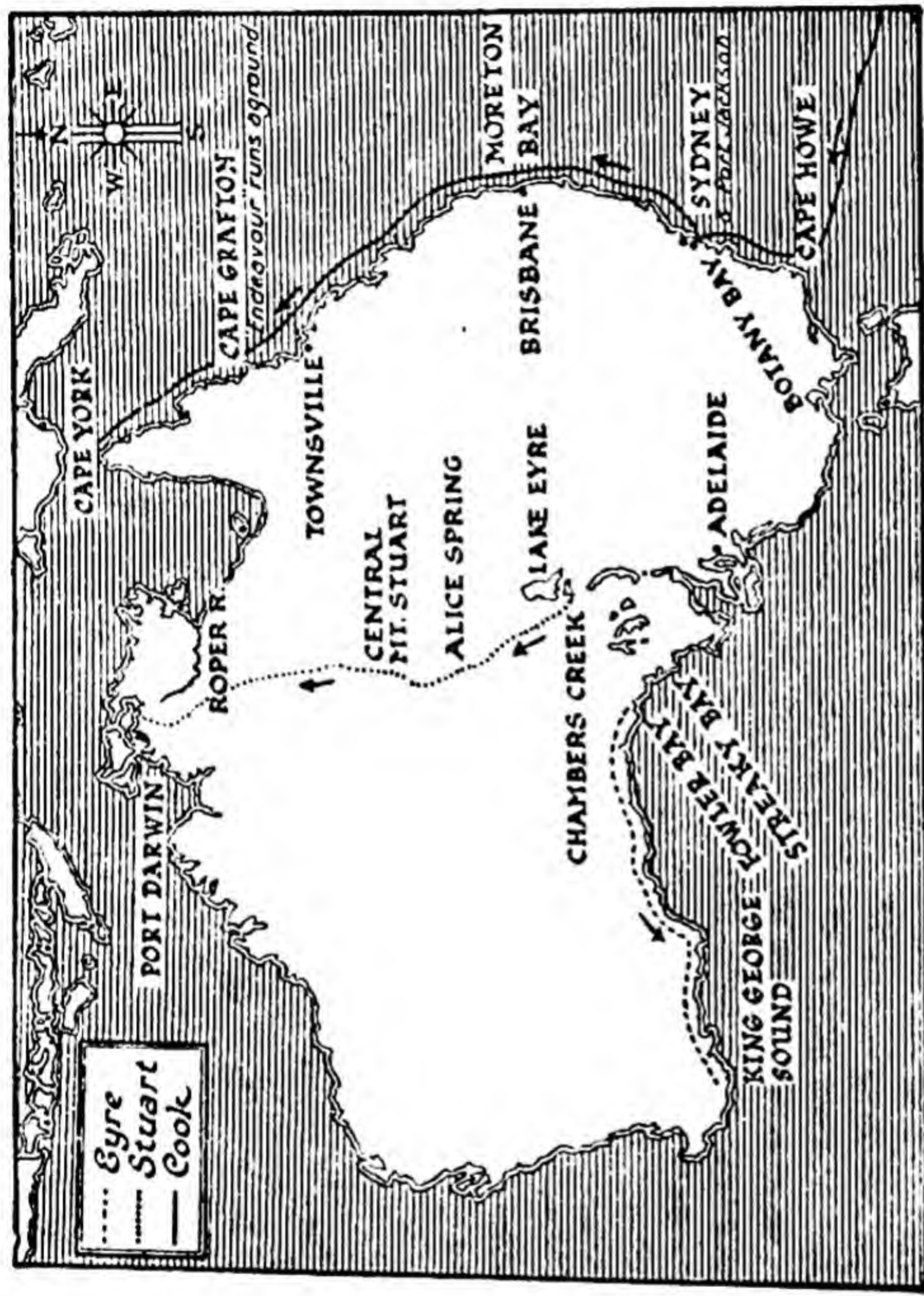
Adelaide. Five expeditions in all did he lead, and much useful work did he do, before he eventually set out on his sixth and last journey, which was to take him right across Australia, from Adelaide to the northernmost point of Arnheim Land. It is the story of this expedition that is now to be told.

While Stuart had been making his first five journeys, the Government had offered a reward of £10,000 to whoever should first cross the entire Continent from North to South. To win this sum an elaborate expedition was organized under two men, Burke and Wills, who obtained camels from India and furnished themselves with everything to make the attempt a success. And a success it was, in that they really did cross the Continent, and reach the Gulf of Carpentaria; but there they were lost, and though the feat had actually been accomplished, little was added to what was already known of the interior. Burke and Wills started from Melbourne on 20th August, 1860, and reached their goal on the 11th February, having taken five months, three weeks and a day.

It was only a few days before the news of the explorers' death reached Melbourne that Stuart set out from Adelaide, the 21st October, 1861. The actual start for the interior was to be made from Chambers Creek. While engaged on his final preparations Stuart received a nasty kick on the head from a horse and was then trampled upon so badly that his injuries delayed the start for five weeks. However, he joined his men at Moolooloo on 20th December, and off they went.

Besides McDouall Stuart the party consisted of a second and third officer, Kekwick and Thring; John McGorriery, a shoeing-smith; J. W. Waterhouse, a naturalist; and four other men. They actually had two more at the beginning, but one of these was sent back for insubordination and the other deserted before many miles had been traversed.





Map of Australia, showing the land explorations of Eyre and Stuart, and the course followed by Captain Cook in his first voyage up the east coast of the Continent.

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Their first difficulties with the aborigines took place at Marchant Springs, where they arrived on 15th February. As Auld, one of the party, was approaching the water-hole, a black man whom he had not seen before called out to others who were hiding in the trees, and soon afterwards a great cloud of smoke was seen to windward, drifting towards the camp. It was evidently their intention to attack the exploring party under cover of the smoke. Soon afterwards a few more blacks were encountered, armed with boomerangs and spears, who had to be driven off with revolvers. Luckily no real damage was done, and Stuart managed to get away before the blinding, acrid smoke enveloped them.

The heat from the burning tropical sun now became terrific. By the time they reached the Hugh River five of the horses had given in and the men were suffering badly. Meanwhile, the attitude of the blacks became yet more hostile. They constantly resorted to their very effective plan of firing the dry grass and bushes; but they carefully avoided an open fight, for they had a wholesome fear of firearms and preferred to hurl boomerangs from vantage points or wave their spears from a safe distance.

On the 12th March the Centre was passed, and about a month later the expedition reached a few welcome ponds, some mile and a half long, twenty feet broad and three feet deep. The country round was absolutely parched and looked as if there had been no rain for many months. There were evidently many aborigines lurking about, for fires were burning in the scrub in every direction.

Stuart named these ponds after a friend of his—Howell, and leaving the main party encamped around them, started off with a couple of companions to explore the neighbourhood, in the hope of finding some route where there might be more water. The plains were covered with grass two or three feet high, giving place



# The Great Australian Desert

in some directions to a dense and almost impassable forest. Occasionally a flock of slate-coloured cockatoos and flights of other birds aroused hopes of water, but mile after mile was traversed and not a vestige or sign was to be seen. Sometimes, even, black clouds would roll up, heavy with the promise of rain, but they invariably rolled away again, leaving the sky as pitilessly blue as ever.

At last another series of water-holes was found. King's Ponds they called them, and thither the party moved on 17th May. All this time Stuart was pushing out in every direction, searching for water and surveying the land as best he could. Several times the camp was advanced from water-hole to water-hole as a new one was discovered; but though the animals were refreshed at the time, the constant heat and difficulty of travel made them weaker and weaker day by day.

An extract from Stuart's journal gives a good idea of the almost hopeless nature of his exploration work:

"Thursday, 5th June. Started at a quarter to eight with Thring and Auld, taking all the water-bags full, also King and Billiatt to take back the horses that carry the water. At four o'clock arrived at the blue-grass swamp. Changed my course to  $7^{\circ}$  east of north, following down the middle of it, which contains a great number of large deep holes in which water has been, but are now quite dry. Followed it until it spread itself over the plain, causing a great number of deep cracks and holes completely covered with grass, gums, and other trees, too thick to get an easy passage through. At sundown, camped on the plain without water.

"A few hours before sundown the sky had a very peculiar appearance to the eastward, as if a black fog were rising, or smoke from an immense fire at a long distance off, but it was too extensive for that. At sundown it assumed a more distinct aspect in the shape of black clouds coming from that direction.

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“Friday, 6th June. After passing over a rotten plain, full of holes and covered with grass and stunted gum-trees, proceeded to the top where we had a good view of the surrounding country—to all appearance one of the blackest and most dismal views a man ever beheld. The cause of it is the trees being so thick, and some of them of a very dark colour, and nothing but their tops can be seen, which gives it the appearance of being a dense scrub.”

In this way the gallant little party pushed on, very slowly, feeling their way from one water-hole to the next, yet always advancing further north. At last a river was struck, which Stuart knew to be the Roper, and in crossing it they felt that the end of the journey was in sight.

It would have been possible, of course, to follow the Roper to its mouth in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and by doing so they would still have achieved their purpose of traversing the Continent; but Stuart was bent on following his plan to the end, and that end meant crossing the river and plunging once more into the unknown that lay beyond.

What with the incessant fires caused by the aborigines, and the difficulties of crossing the Roper, which was deep and unfordable, progress now became slower than ever. But the country was delightful, and abundance of water, as well as a supply of fresh meat from a horse which they had to kill, soon put the party in good fettle again. The black men they now met were friendly and willingly came up to look at them. The horses especially interested these aborigines, though when Thring opened the lips of one of the animals and showed its teeth, they ran away in fright.

For a short distance, Stuart and his men now followed the banks of the Roper River, somewhat loth to leave behind them the pleasant land where they had enjoyed themselves after the weary march from Adelaide. But



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Stuart knew that it was taking them out of their way; so, on 4th July, they resolutely struck off to the north-west and into the hills. Here they came across other gorges, at the bottom of which ran tributaries of the Chambers River, as they had christened the stream by which they rested so long.

Very magnificent these gorges were, piles of massed-up rocks, and far below, water flashing in and out among the trees. Standing on the edge of a precipice, with a sheer drop into the creek below, and looking out upon range upon range of hills, they often had the utmost difficulty in descending to the luxuriant forests through which the streams ran.

The horses had mostly worn out their shoes, and the rough ground they had to traverse was making the poor creatures limp painfully, so camp was made by the water's edge, and the spare stock of shoes which had been kept for the return journey was broken into.

On 18th July they came to a creek, which they named the Priscilla, and then pushed on up the hills beyond it, where the horses collected so much of the dry grass on their forelegs that the riders were constantly having to dismount and pull the stuff away, to save them from stumbling. After crossing a stream they named Allen Creek, at last they came upon the Adelaide River. It was about eighty yards wide, and so still that they could not see any current moving, and for a while were unable to tell which way the stream was flowing. The banks sloping down to the water were twelve feet deep, and lined with tall, stout bamboos.

Stuart's course for some time now lay along the Adelaide, through gorges, marshes, palm groves, and rocks. The creeks were named as they went, Anna Creek, Thring Creek, etc., and a large swamp was christened Freshwater Marsh. Mosquitoes worried them almost out of their senses and made sleep at night an impossibility.

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On 24th July Stuart decided to leave the river and strike due north, with the double purpose of reaching the coast, which he reckoned to be only a few miles distant, and of avoiding the almost impassable marshes.

So on they plodded over the gently undulating land, covered with stunted trees and low bushes, until presently they found themselves at the side of a large grassy valley. As they padded along the soft turf a sound struck Stuart's ears which he had long been waiting for. It was a steady, muffled rumbling—persistent, unchanging—a sound that brought joy to his heart. It passed unnoticed by the others, who plodded down the slope and up the other side with the stolid indifference begotten of traversing many such valleys.

At the summit of the hill lay a dense belt of scrub, through which the horses had to clear a way. As they went crashing through, Thring, who was leading the way, suddenly shouted: "The sea! The sea!"

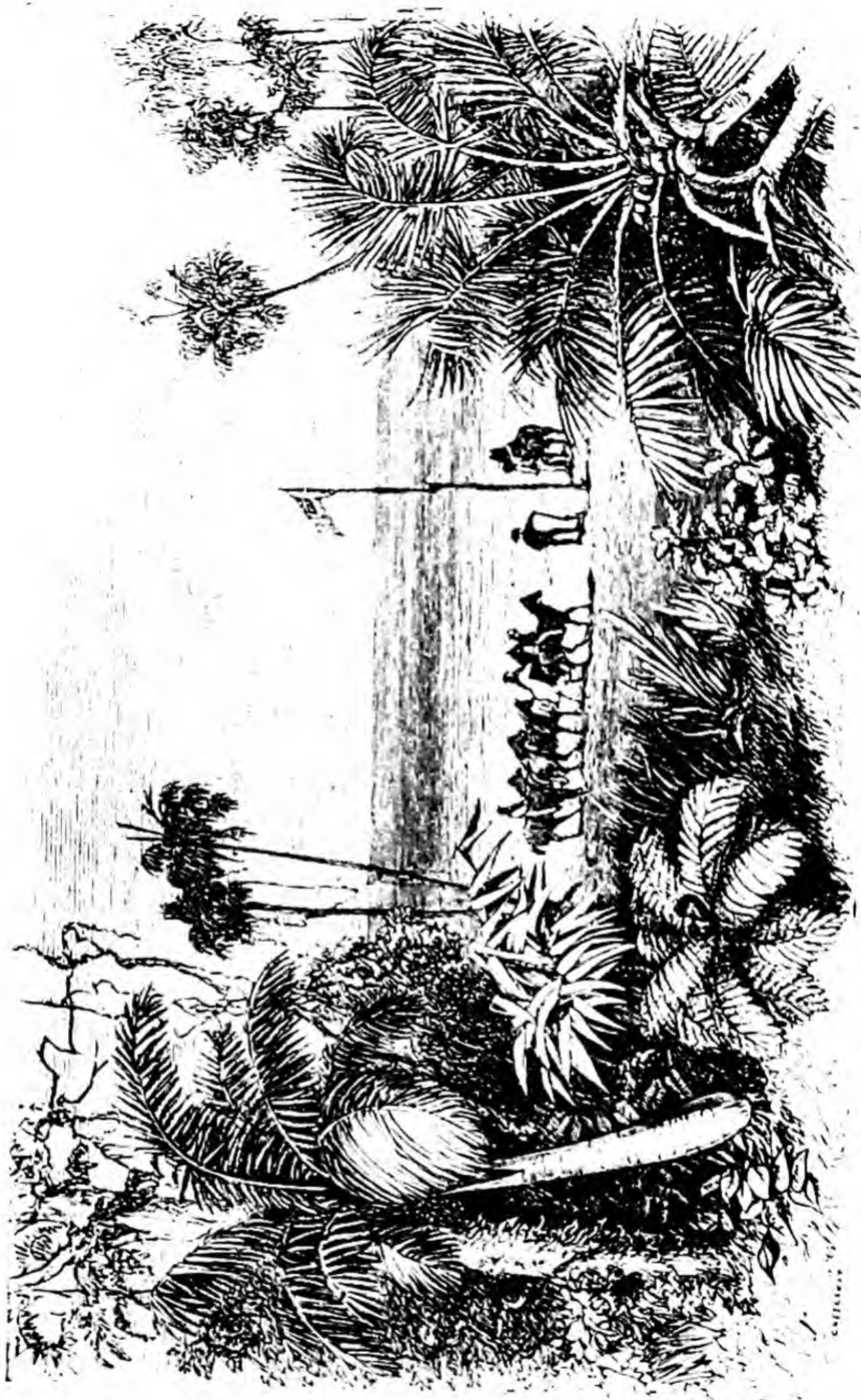
A sort of stupor of surprise fell on the party and he had to repeat his words again before any of the others would believe it possible. Then they all rushed forward; scratches and tears were forgotten, nothing mattered, until every man of the little band had forced his way through the scrub and stood feasting his eyes on the waters of the Indian Ocean.

The great task had been accomplished, Australia had been crossed from south to north, not in a mere mad rush, but with the observation and surveying proper to such an important undertaking.

The tide was out and the beach was a glistening sheet of soft blue mud. Stuart waded across this to the water's edge and went in up to the knees, washing his face and hands in the brine as he had promised his friend, Sir Richard MacDonnell, the late governor, he would do if ever he set foot on the shores of Van Dieman's Gulf.

Once the excitement of reaching the coast had died





STUART AND HIS PARTY PLANT THE FLAG ON THE SHORES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN





# The Great Australian Desert

down, the next thing to do was to follow the shore to the spot where the Adelaide River flowed out into the sea. This promised to be a difficult task, for the mud was so soft that the horses sank into it. Various experiments were made, but it was found impossible to keep a footing on the blue ooze. After thinking the matter over, Stuart came to the stoical resolution of wasting no more precious time, but making his way across the Continent and back to Adelaide again!

So a due record was made of their arrival, and signed by every member of the expedition; it was then sealed up in a tin canister, three cheers were given for the Queen and another three for the Prince of Wales, and, after little more than twenty-four hours at the goal they had journeyed so far to reach, the gallant little party turned their faces from the blue water and started homeward over the sun-baked desert.

Whatever the difficulties of the outward journey had been, they were nothing to those encountered on the return. Such little water as they had met with was now dried up. Horses and men suffered frightfully from thirst and exhaustion; many of the former, indeed, succumbed on the way. Stuart himself was attacked by scurvy and went almost blind. But dogged perseverance won through in the end, and by the 18th December they were all back in Adelaide, worn out, but triumphant.

One of Stuart's ideas, ridiculed at the time by many who could see no further than their own noses, was to lay a telegraph cable across the Australian desert from south to north. This has now been done, and it will long remain a memorial to this intrepid explorer, for it follows the route pursued on his memorable journey.

Some time before Stuart's exploration across the Continent, there was a general feeling in Adelaide that it would be a good thing if an overland route could be

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opened giving access to the rapidly rising colony of Western Australia. One experienced explorer, named Eyre, resolved to undertake the discovery of such a route, though he was afraid that any road along the arid coast of the Australian Bight would be impracticable. He and a friend, Scott, had already been exploring the interior, so they sent on their stores and effects to Fowler's Bay and there re-organized for a determined effort to reach the West at King George's Sound.

Determined it had to be, indeed, for Eyre made repeated attempts to get along the deserted coast, waterless and shadeless beneath a burning sun; and each time he was driven back to Fowler's Bay. At last, almost desperate at failing to make so much as a start, he decided to accomplish the passage to the Sound, even if it cost him his life. With one white man, Baxter, and three native boys, nine horses, a foal, a Timor pony, and six sheep, he started out from Fowler's Bay on 23rd February, 1841.

On 3rd March, they reached Yeer-kaumbam-kauwe, despite excessive drought, and continually blinded by flying sand which, with the intense heat and the horseflies, nearly drove them out of their senses. But they struggled on till the 12th March, leaving their sheep behind, and their horses staggering with weakness from want of water.

Having found water by digging, they went back to bring up the sheep, which arrived in wretched plight. Pausing till the 18th they again went on through most miserable country, and under the same killing circumstances, pursued by swarms of horseflies.

Every now and again they were obliged to send back for water; and being still 800 miles from King George's Sound they threw away as much of their baggage as they could possibly spare in order to relieve the sinking, thirst-consumed horses. Pack-saddles, water-kegs, buckets, firearms, ammunition—all were abandoned.



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Their sheep were now reduced to two, and their flour to 142 lb. to be divided among five persons. The only thing that made life at all possible was an occasional cool wind from the north. So utterly destitute were they of water that they were forced to seek it as the black men did, in the roots of the mallee scrub, which they cut into short lengths and drained.

The next sacrifice was the Timor pony, who was followed by two more horses. So appalling was the heat and drought that the men had to be up before sunrise to get water by brushing the dew from the bushes with a sponge or with tufts of soft grass. It was their only chance of living.

They had struggled on 160 miles further before they got a little more water by digging in the sand, but the horses sometimes had to go four or five days together without a drink. There was now only one sheep left, and a bare  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of flour for each man as his day's ration. The aboriginals in the party, who could devour an incredible amount of meat, stole as much as they could lay hands on; and, when Eyre pulled them up, they grew mutinous and two of them deserted. Soon afterwards the last sheep was killed.

Well would it have been for everyone if the two blacks had gone clear off. But they skulked about the camp, and in the evening, while Eyre was in the bush tending the horses, they stole up to his tent while no one was looking, seized a gun and shot Baxter dead. When he heard the report Eyre hurried back to camp, but before he could reach it they had escaped, with all the stores they could carry.

It is hard to imagine a more terrible calamity. In the midst of so horrible a desert, 500 miles from the end of his journey, Eyre found himself left absolutely alone with a solitary black man, whose fidelity was doubtful. He buried Baxter in the sand and then turned resolutely to face the ordeal that lay before him.

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With true explorer's doggedness, he struggled on with Wylie, the black, for another 150 miles, constantly menaced by the two murderers, who tried to trap him and entice Wylie to join them. When they reached a water-hole in the sand on 3rd May, the horses had been seven days without a drink, and with a very little dry scorched-up grass to eat. Eyre and Wylie had only a few spoonfuls of tea to drink each day.

But by now the worst part of the Bight had been passed and the country was beginning to change. There were touches of greenness, and here and there a Banksia tree. Flocks of black cockatoos were met, another sign of water. They rested for three days, wondering what had become of the murderers who had not been seen for some time, and were, indeed, never heard of again.

At last they started off once more, and Eyre was compelled to shoot another horse. Wylie now exhibited his prowess as a trencherman. As soon as the animal was skinned, the black man cut off a big piece of flesh and began to roast it, while Eyre sliced off about 100 lb. of the best meat and hung it in strips upon the trees to dry in the sun. He then handed over the rest of the carcase, bones, etc., to Wylie to do with as he pleased. Before dark that worthy had made an oven and roasted a joint of some 20 lb. to sustain him during the night. Later in the evening there was a sad and dismal groaning, with Wylie complaining of feeling very ill in his throat, the result, he felt certain, of working too hard! It did not affect his appetite, however, for he spent the whole night gnawing and chewing. The next morning, knowing that it was his last chance, he got busy with the skeleton of the horse and never ceased eating till they struck camp in the afternoon.

That day they went only eight miles, to a grassy spot where they camped for the night. Next day they pushed on, though both felt far from well after such an unwonted feast of horse-flesh. But this did not affect



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Wylie's appetite. He consumed 9 lb. of solid meat with the utmost ease and even then complained of feeling weak with hunger. So he would eat on until he had to roll on the ground and groan, staggering at last to his feet—to go and eat some more.

They travelled now along the shore, occasionally seeing mountain ducks. As a marvel, too, they came across a few drops of moisture trickling from a granite rock, the first running water they had seen since leaving Streaky Bay, hundreds of miles behind them.

On the 18th Wylie managed to shoot a kangaroo. He opened the proceedings by eating 1½ lb. of horse-flesh. He then got outside the two hind-legs and complete entrails of the kangaroo. He next took in his stride, as it were, a penguin which had been found dead on the beach. After this he swallowed the whole of the kangaroo hide, having first singed off the hair. As a sort of tasty savoury he ate the tough skin of the penguin. For once he admitted that he had eaten as much as he could hold.

About thirty miles beyond Point Malcolm, Eyre found traces of some Europeans, who had slept on the shore near the beach, and upon one tree was the inscription: "Ship *Julian*, 1840," and a few other names. The weather was now growing very wet, and as, far back in the Bight, they had abandoned all their clothes except trousers, boots, shirts and hats, on account of the heat, they now began to suffer from cold.

The country changed, too, and they were able to water the horses from an occasional pool. On the 29th May they found a small fresh-water lake, the first of the sort they had seen for 600 miles. King George's Sound was now only 300 miles away, and one day, as they approached the sea, to his delight Eyre saw a whaling ship at anchor, the *Mississippi*. They were hospitably received on board, given warm clothes, and furnished with as much stores as they needed to last

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them to the Sound. Eyre's troubles were now over. He and Wylie spent a fortnight on board the vessel, having a good rest, while their horses were at grass on shore.

After having experienced the greatest kindness from all aboard the *Mississippi*, Eyre and Wylie again set forward on their journey. They found running streams of water, and food for the horses, and often passed salt lakes on which were swans, ducks, and many kinds of wild fowl.

On the evening of 30th June Eyre caught sight of the hills lying immediately behind King George's Sound. They were still far away, but with renewed energy he urged Wylie forward. A few days later they came upon horse tracks of recent date. At last they were obliged to leave the horses on the banks of the King's River, which could not be forded, and soon afterwards Wylie and Eyre walked into Albany, where they received the heroes' welcome they certainly deserved.

On the 13th, Eyre sailed for Adelaide, where he arrived after an absence of over twelve months, having proved conclusively that for many years to come it would be useless to try and make a road between Adelaide and King George's Sound.



## CHAPTER XIII

### Sir Francis Drake Sails Round the World

**E**NGLISHMEN had long been thinking about the great unknown Pacific Ocean. Spain treated it as a sort of preserve, drove foreigners from its waters and claimed the whole of its treasures as their own. But Englishmen were little disposed to accept their claim; it only wanted a gallant sailor to put it to the test, and Francis Drake made up his mind to do it.

Drake had an old score with the Spaniards to pay off. Thrice he had been across to America, and each time he had come to blows with the Dons, giving as good as he got, but missing the fortune he was in search of. The Spaniards held him as little better than a pirate. From their point of view, maybe, they were right; but Elizabeth of England trusted him, and when, in 1577, he told her of his plan to reach the Pacific round the southern point of America, through the channel Magellan had discovered some fifty years previously, she gave him secret help in furnishing the ships, and wished him well in his endeavour to harry the Don with fire and sword.

It would never have done, however, to let escape one single hint or suspicion of what was afoot; for Spain had her spies in England, and if Drake had announced to all and sundry that he was going to beard King Philip in his own waters, great high-pooped galleons would soon have been sent to lie in wait for the little fleet, and disaster would have come within a few miles of the English coast. So it was given out that the new expedition was bound for Alexandria, though most men in the

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West of England chuckled to themselves when they thought of whither Frankie Drake was really bound.

In the summer of 1577, the fleet of five vessels was got ready, and the crews, numbering in all some 164 men, were chosen for the voyage. Drake hoisted his Admiral's flag in the *Pelican*, of 100 tons; Captain John Winter commanded the *Elizabeth*, of 80 tons; Captain John Thomas, the *Marigold* barque, of 30 tons; Captain John Chester, the *Swan* fly-boat, of 50 tons; and Captain Thomas Moon, the *Christopher* pinnace, of 15 tons. With this fleet, Drake bid defiance to Spain and set off to work havoc on the coasts of South America, and incidentally to sail round the world, being the second man ever to do so.

Large stores of provisions and ammunition were laid aboard, nor did the Admiral omit "to make provision for merriment and delight, as well as for the utilities; carrying with him expert musicians, rich furniture (all the vessels for his table, yea, many belonging to the cook-room, being of pure silver); with divers shows of all sorts of curious workmanship, whereby the civility and magnificence of his native country might, among all nations, be the more admired."

Rough weather postponed the actual start until the 13th December, when anchors were weighed and the fleet sailed out of Plymouth and left the English shores behind. On the 27th, they made the island of Mogador, off the Barbary coast. Here Drake remained awhile, trading with the Moors and making prizes of several Spanish merchant vessels, one of which he equipped in place of the *Christopher*, taking in wood and water, and thereafter sailing for the Island of Maya, where a Portuguese ship laden with provisions was captured. Drake put on board of her a crew of twenty-eight men under Thomas Doughty.

Encouraged by this success, the fleet stood across the Atlantic for the shores of Brazil, which they made near



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the River La Plata. Coasting down to Cape Deseada, a good port was here found where Drake broke up the *Swan* and set his men to work in securing supplies of seal-flesh. He also got into touch with the natives, fierce-looking men in dresses of skins, with their faces painted in bright colours, and wearing horns on their heads. Notwithstanding their forbidding appearance these natives were a jolly lot, and liked to dance to the merry English morrises and jigs played by the ship's musicians.

After a fortnight's sojourn in Seal Bay the fleet set sail for the south, and on 20th June, 1578, dropped anchor in Port Julian. It was a place of gruesome omen, for on the shore they saw the gallows Magellan had erected for some of those who mutinied against him. The place proved no more auspicious for Drake. While holding a sort of shooting match with bows and arrows on the beach, Robert Winter pulled his bowstring so hard that he broke it, and the savages seized the opportunity to rain down upon him a volley of arrows, two of which wounded him.

Upon this the gunner aimed his piece at them, but it misfired, and one of their arrows shot him dead. Drake hurried to the spot and got the rest of his men off without further trouble; but that night Winter died and the next day both he and the gunner were buried on a rocky island in the fatal harbour.

It was while they were staying at Port Julian, too, that another unhappy incident occurred. Thomas Doughty, who had been put in command of the Portuguese vessel captured at Maya, was discovered in some dishonest practices, and after due trial by a jury of twelve men, was found guilty of treason. In those days there was only one punishment for such a crime, and hard as Drake found it to do, he had no alternative but to sentence the culprit to death. Doughty was accordingly beheaded on the poop, and the salutary lesson was taken to heart by the crew.

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On the 17th August, after some six weeks spent in this unhappy spot, Drake sailed from Port Julian, and a day or two later reached Cape Virgins. Here, in remembrance of his friend, Sir Christopher Hatton, of London (where his name and house are still perpetuated in Hatton Garden, the mart of precious stones), he changed the name of his vessel to the *Golden Hind*, Sir Christopher's crest. On the 21st they entered the Straits of Magellan, and with no more than the usual bad weather made the passage safely.

It was on the 6th September that English keels first ploughed the waters of the Pacific, a day fateful in the history of the world, for it meant that the monopoly of Spain was broken for ever, and that England laid claim to and won the mastery of the seas. It marked the downfall of Spanish pretensions and the rise of Britain as the greatest colonizer in every quarter of the globe.

Early in October the fleet ran into a terrific gale, in which the *Marigold* drifted from her consorts and was never heard of again. Only two vessels of the original squadron now remained. But as though even they were too much for this adventure, Fate stepped in again, for when they put into a bay for shelter the cable of the *Golden Hind* broke and she drifted from her moorings out to sea. After waiting for her to reappear, Winter went in search of his consort, but finding no sign, and deaf to the protests of his men, he put about and made sail for England.

So Drake was now left alone. The wind was high and bore the *Golden Hind* before it, far to the south. At last she took shelter on the rocky coast of Tierra del Fuego. After raging for fifty days, the storm abated and on the 28th October they dropped anchor in smooth water in a harbour of the island whose southern extremity is now called Cape Horn.

Drake was rowed ashore, and clambering up the





Sir Francis Drake's course up the Pacific Coast of America.

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rocks made his way to the top of the cliff, where he leaned over as far as he could, and shouted to his men that he was further south than any living man had ever been.

Two days later, with a fair wind and a clear sky, Drake resumed his voyage along the mainland, made the island of Mocha, and on 5th December entered Valparaiso. There they found a ship they had been told of, riding at anchor. She proved to be the *Grand Captain of the South Sea*. There were eight Spaniards in her, and three negroes, who, never dreaming that any but Spaniards could be sailing the waters of the Pacific, welcomed the new-comers as friends, with a roll of drums and an open cask of wine.

But they were speedily undeceived when the Englishmen crowded on to their deck and Thomas Moon began to lay about him, striking one of the Spaniards with the words: "Abajo Perro!" meaning "Down, you dog!" This was a rude surprise for the Dons. So amazed were they that very little resistance was put up, and in a short time they were all battered down beneath hatches. All, that is, save one, who took a sudden dive into the sea, swam ashore, and made his way to Santiago, where he gave warning of the fiends let loose among them.

There were only some nine households in the town, and they fled without more ado and abandoned the place. The Englishmen pillaged the houses, where they found stores of wine and a great quantity of cedar wood. Having taken what they wanted, they set their prisoners ashore, except a Greek named John Griego, whom they kept to pilot them to Lima.

The next port of call was Coquimbo, where Drake sent fourteen of his men ashore to get water. But the Spaniards had raised the alarm, and an army of 300 horsemen and 200 foot marched down bravely against this handful of mariners, killed one of them, and then



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marched back, while the Englishmen got off safely. Nothing daunted, Drake ran his ship into a little bay near by and refitted her, building as well a small pinnace for coasting purposes.

On the 19th January, 1579, they set sail again, and landed for water at a place called Tarapaca. Down on the beach was a Spaniard, lying asleep with thirteen bars of silver, to the value of 6,000 ducats, heaped beside him. The bars were removed, but the man was left to have his sleep out.

Advancing a little further up the coast, the English landed again and fell in with a Spaniard and an Italian driving eight llamas, each beast carrying two leather bags slung across its back, and each bag containing 50 lb. of silver. These were taken on board. Fortune was indeed favouring them! At Arica, on 7th February, they captured a couple of small vessels, one laden with 800 lb. of silver.

At Callao, three days later, they found twelve vessels lying fast moored to one anchor, all their sails having been taken ashore, for the masters and merchants were profoundly unsuspecting of the presence of an enemy on the coast. Drake rifled these vessels, which were full of plate, silk, linen and other goods; but what was more to the purpose, he heard that a great treasure ship, the *Cacafuego*, had gone to La Payta, laden with treasure. So, anxious to stay there no longer, but to be after her, he cut the cables of the anchored vessels and let them drift out to sea. He then weighed anchor on the *Golden Hind* and set off in pursuit of the treasure galleon.

The Spaniards boasted that the *Cacafuego* was the glory of the South Seas. Drake came up with her on St. David's Day, off Cape San Francisco, and his first shot having carried away her mainmast, the Captain surrendered.

A prize crew was immediately put on board, and to

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elude pursuit, Drake took the *Cacafuego* far out to sea for two nights and a day. When at a safe distance from the mainland he caused the ships to lie by, and, overhauling the galleon, transferred her treasure to his own vessel. It proved a prize that took them long to reckon up, the humblest sailor's share being sufficient to make him a man of wealth. Besides precious stones and jewels, she carried thirteen chests full of reals of plate, 80 lb. of gold and 26 tons of silver. The total value was 360,000 pieces of gold, and Drake's ship was now, indeed, the "*Golden*" *Hind*. In a spirit of fun Drake called for the bill of lading and wrote out a formal receipt for the exact total.

Among other plate were two fine bowls of silver gilt, which belonged to the pilot. "Señor Pilot," said Drake, "you have here two silver cups, but I must needs have one of them." When the pilot left them his boy said perkily to Drake: "Captain, our ship shall be called no more the *Cacafuego*, or Spitfire, but the *Cacaplata* or Spit-plate. Your ship shall be called the *Cacafuego*!"

Having rifled her of all that was valuable Drake now dismissed the *Cacafuego*, and sailing westward to avoid Panama, where he would undoubtedly have met with a hot reception, hugged the American coast as far as Acapulco, making many small prizes on the way. There he refitted the sea-worn *Hind* and anxiously considered what course he had best adopt in order to get his wonderful spoils safe to an English harbour.

To return by the way they had come would have been foolhardy, for the Spaniards were sure to be lying in wait about the Straits of Magellan; on the other hand, to sail round the world was an undertaking that took some courage, for only one vessel had ever done such a thing, and the voyage had been by no means easy. Was it not possible to go back round the north of America, just as he had come hither by its southern extremity?



# Sir Francis Drake

Drake determined to find out, and announced his intention to the ship's company, who were ready to follow him wheresoever he led. They coasted up to Nicaragua, where they watered and wooded, and took a few more prizes, though the men picked only what they fancied, so wealthy had they become. They then sailed further north, though the intense cold became a real difficulty after the heat of the tropics.

On 17th June the *Golden Hind* made a magnificent harbour, which, under the name of San Francisco, is now one of the world's greatest seaports. There they were soon friendly with the natives, who looked upon them as little short of gods. The white cliffs along the shore struck a familiar chord in the breasts of the far-travelled Englishmen, and Drake called California "New Albion."

The cold they experienced with every mile further northward that they sailed, and the increasing difficulties of navigation, now induced Drake to give up his idea of a north-east passage. So after five weeks spent on the coast of California he made a course westward, crossed the Pacific, and on the 16th October sighted the Philippines. Thence he sailed on to Ternate, in the Moluccas.

On arriving at this harbour he sent the king a velvet cloak, asking permission to trade for spices and to obtain a supply of provisions. By way of reply the king came off to the *Golden Hind* in great pomp, and accepting the rich present Drake gave him, sent in exchange huge supplies of rice, fowls, sugar, cloves, sago, etc. But there was something about his behaviour that aroused Drake's suspicions; so when the monarch invited him to go ashore he declined, but sent a party of his officers with a variety of presents.

They were received with a remarkable display of pomp and shown into a large well-built house near the castle which the prince—a man of more than ordinary

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courage and ability—had captured from the Portuguese. About a thousand persons were assembled there, among whom were seven ambassadors from different countries, and sixty grave and reverend elders belonging to the royal council.

At last the king came in, escorted by twelve armed men, and advancing beneath a gorgeous canopy, glittering with gold and jewels. "He was attired after the manner of the country, but more sumptuously than the rest. From his waist down to the ground was all cloth of gold, and very rich; his legs were bare, but on his feet were a pair of shoes made of Cordovan skin. In the attire of his head were finely-wreathed hooped rings of gold, and about his neck he had a chain of perfect gold, the links of which were great and one-fold double. On his fingers he had six jewels, and sitting in his chair of state at his right hand stood a page with a fan in his hand, breathing and gathering the air to the king. The fan was about 2 ft. long and 1 ft. broad, set with sapphires, richly embroidered and nipped to staff three foot in length, by which the page held and moved it. Our gentlemen having delivered their message and received order accordingly, were licensed to depart, being safely conducted back again by one of the king's consul."

Having procured a supply of provisions and a large quantity of cloves, Drake sailed from the Moluccas on 9th November and the next day anchored at a small island near the eastern part of the Celebes, which they named Crab Island. As it was one vast, dense forest with trees, lofty, large and straight and free from branches, the Admiral resolved upon thoroughly repairing his vessel, that she might be in trim to undertake the homeward voyage. Among the trees by night glowed an infinite swarm of fire-flies, whose bodies, though no bigger than an ordinary house-fly, made so great a show and light that every twig was like a burn-



## Sir Francis Drake

ing candle. The island also contained a wonderful show of bats, as big as hens, and the land-crabs were so large that one furnished an ample dinner for four men.

On 12th December the *Golden Hind* set sail for the West, but she soon got involved in the maze of islands and reefs that lay off the coast of Celebes. To escape these dangers Drake held to the northward, but on 9th January, 1579, when he supposed himself to be in an open sea, his adventurous voyage narrowly escaped a sudden and fatal end. The ship was scudding under full sail before a fresh wind when suddenly she ran aground on a dangerous shoal. There they stuck from eight o'clock that night until four the next afternoon, "Having ground too much, and too little to land in; and water too much, and yet too little to sail in."

They hove overboard eight guns, three tons of cloves, and as much treasure as would have made them all wealthy men for life, as well as bales of sugar and meal. Happily for them, no sooner had the vessel been lightened than the wind shifted a point or two, and, blowing up a gale, fairly blew them off the rock and into the open sea.

Having suffered many dangers from winds and shoals, on 8th February the adventurers fell in with the island of Barativa. Thence they departed to Java, which was then governed by five rajahs. Of these five they sometimes had four on board at one time, and usually a couple. They were wonderfully clothed gentlemen, in the gayest colours imaginable, but were naked to the waist, except for their heads, upon which they wore turbans. From the waist they had long flowing skirts. The people were tall and warlike, well armed with swords and shields, and carried sharp daggers which, like the rest of their accoutrements, were made of beautifully inlaid metal.

From Java, Drake steered a course to the Cape of

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Good Hope, doubled it in safety, and on the 22nd July arrived at Sierra Leone. Here a supply of water was obtained and refreshment of oysters and various fruits.

On the 24th the *Golden Hind* once more put to sea and concluded her prosperous voyage on 28th September, sailing bravely into Plymouth Harbour after an absence of nearly three years. Guns were fired as the little vessel came in, and on landing Drake was received by the mayor and corporation, who accorded him and his crew a reception worthy of the heroes they had proved themselves.

After a few days' festivities, the *Golden Hind* weighed anchor again and sailed for Deptford. There she was uproariously received by the populace, and after some delay, due to a doubt as to how politic it would be to countenance her subject's deeds on the Spanish high seas, Elizabeth went down to see the *Golden Hind* for herself and knighted Drake on the deck that had borne him so far.



## CHAPTER XIV

### The Great Lakes of Africa: Burton, Speke, and Baker

FROM the earliest days of civilization, men lived on the banks of the Nile, the Great River of Egypt. They even worshipped it as the source of all life. Yet where it came from no man could tell. Out of the fierce burning sands of the desert it flowed, in a vast life-giving stream, and though travellers talked of great inland seas and far distant mountains—"Mountains of the Moon," men called them—no one had ever been there. Then the Greeks came, and with that marvellous wisdom of theirs to which we owe all that is best in our present world, they made certain discoveries, vague yet full of suggestions that later times have mostly proved true.

Knowledge of the sources of the Nile had advanced but little by the middle of the last century, when it was known that the great river came from two huge streams: the Blue Nile, flowing down from Lake Tsana in Abyssinia, and the White Nile, which had been traced as far south as Gondokoro. The Bahr-al-Ghazal, the great western feeder, was also talked of, yet the ultimate sources of the Nile stream were still undiscovered.

Missionaries in Central Africa picked up what seemed strange stories from Arabs and others with whom they came in contact. Great mountains, evidently the ancient Mountains of the Moon, were described; Mount Kenya and Kilimanjaro were actually visited by white men; and the great African lakes were mentioned, though so vaguely that the missionaries sent home stories of a

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vast inland sea like the Caspian, that lay in the heart of Africa.

In 1857, the first actual party of exploration set out from Zanzibar, under the command of two army men—Captain Richard Burton and Lieutenant Speke. Burton was already famous for his daring journey to Medinah and Mecca in the disguise of a Moslem pilgrim. The hostility of the Arab traders in the interior, as well as the enmity of the Masai tribes, thwarted any hope of success; but they followed the beaten Arab track to Unyamwezi, where Burton fell ill and had to hand over the command of the expedition to Speke.

Speke met great difficulty with the porters, who had no desire to go further into the interior; but after much coaxing and many bribes he was able to gather together sufficient to make a move forward, and in somewhat lame fashion the explorers reached Ujiji, and thus discovered Lake Tanganyika. They explored the northern portion rather half-heartedly, for by this time the two white men had fallen out, and were daily becoming more jealous and suspicious of one another. Hardly aware of the importance of their discovery, and unwilling even to discuss the subject, they returned to Unyamwezi, where Burton fell sick again.

A delicate situation now arose, for neither wanted to return to the coast with so little accomplished, yet Burton was loth to let Speke push on by himself. But, at last, he gave a grudging consent. Speke gathered together a useful caravan, and started off northward.

It was early in the morning of 3rd August, 1858, as his caravan reached the top of a gentle hill, that Speke, looking ahead, was thrilled at the sight of a vast expanse of sapphire-blue water, stretching like the sea into the dimness of the horizon. Islands were dotted here and there, forests covered the shores of this huge inland sea, and an occasional tiny speck betokened the canoe of



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some Muanza fisherman. Below them, nestling in the emerald green of the trees, were the brown thatched huts of native villages, from which thin spirals of blue smoke rose in the still air.

Speke realized to the full the importance and wonder of his discovery, though he had no idea of the vastness of the lake he had found. Here, undoubtedly, was the great natural reservoir from which the Nile drew its waters. He asked the black men what they called it. They answered, "Nyanza"—which, like "Nyassa," is really a Bantu word for a large sheet of water. So Speke named this inland sea Victoria Nyanza.

Much as he wanted to explore its shores, the discoverer was unable to stay long enough to do so, for he had promised to pick up Burton at Kazé, on the way back to the coast. When they met, the subject of the great new lake was scarcely discussed. Burton was sore at not having found it himself, and Speke was anxious to get the present unpleasant expedition over and return at a later date to explore the lake by himself, and ascertain whether it really was, as he felt convinced, the headwaters of the Nile. So they went back to Zanzibar, where Burton stayed, while Speke hurried home to England with the news of his discovery, and set about collecting means of returning to Africa to complete his work.

As a companion for the new expedition, Speke chose Captain James Grant, a valiant soldier, who had fought through the Indian Mutiny, and was a distinguished zoologist and sportsman.

Before leaving England, Speke made arrangements with the English consul at Zanzibar to have porters and a consignment of his goods carried on to await him at Unyamwezi. He and Grant travelled to Zanzibar while this was being done, and by early October, 1860, they were ready to start.

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The expedition consisted of a corporal and nine privates of Hottentot police, lent by the Cape Government; one *jemadar* and twenty-five privates of the Indian troops employed by the Sultan of Zanzibar; an Arab caravan leader with seventy-five freed slaves; a guide, with one hundred negro porters; two personal servants, a cook, and Bombay, the interpreter, who had accompanied Speke on his first expedition with Burton. There were twelve mules and three donkeys, and almost from the start Speke had to let the Hottentots ride the donkeys, for, strange to say, these black men were quite unequal to the marching and daily routine of the journey. They were, in fact, a nuisance and a drag throughout the whole expedition.

Holding the flag proudly aloft, the guide led the way. The expedition reached Usagara with little difficulty. But here Baraka, the chief of the Wanguana men, became so impertinent and difficult to manage that he had to be superseded and his post given to the man who had started with the expedition as cook. At Usagara, also, the expedition was attacked by fever, which laid out the Hottentots and caught Grant in its grip.

However, they pushed steadily on to the mountains, sending back a number of sick Hottentots, as well as the camera, which Grant was unable to work—for in those early days of photography plates had to be prepared by a liquid process and changed in a dark tent, the stifling air of which, beneath the blazing tropical sun, made Grant so ill that he was quite incapacitated.

West of Usagara lies the rolling plateau of Ugogo, peopled by a warlike race, where famine was bad and the black men none too friendly disposed towards the new-comers. Water was so scarce in the wells that it had to be bought at a stiff price. However, they advanced steadily across Ugogo, though the porters were now beginning to desert in a steady stream, and the

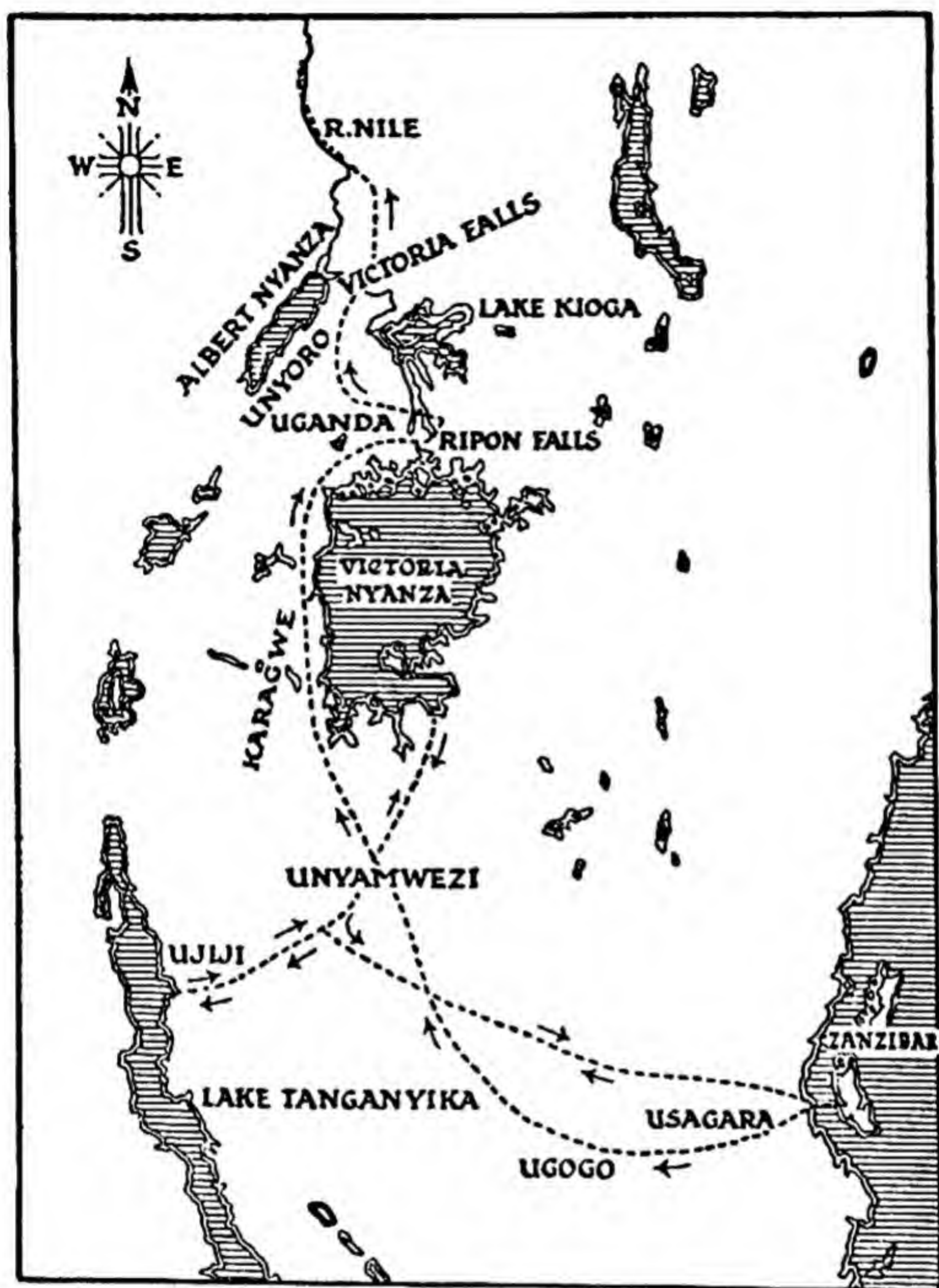




DRAKE AND HIS MEN ATTACK THE SPANISH GALLEON







Map showing the routes followed by Speke and Grant in their discovery of the great lakes of Central Africa.

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rainy season was rapidly flooding the whole countryside.

Fresh food was ensured by the large bags of game shot by Speke and Grant. But the expedition would have come to an end there and then had it not been for the help of some friendly Arabs in Unyamwezi, who sent seventy porters to their relief. Of the original party that set out from Zanzibar, six of the Hottentots were already dead or had been sent back to the coast, twenty-five of the Sultan's men and ninety-eight of the negro porters had deserted, all the mules and donkeys were dead, and most of the belongings of the two white men had been lost or stolen.

Unyamwezi, the Land of the Moon, is a long-shaped country to the south of Victoria Nyanza. Its Bantu people are negroes, famous through that part of the world for their strength and skill as porters; but they were very loth to join Speke's expedition when he tried to recruit among them. While in their country he heard of another great lake, also called Nyanza, whose waters were salt. This was, of course, the Albert Nyanza, though Speke paid little attention to the stories he was told about it.

At last, after infinite trouble and endless worry caused by the demands every petty chieftain they passed made for *hongo*, or tribute, the party reached Usui, a country at the south-west corner of Victoria Nyanza, and from there made their way on to Karagwe, where the chieftain, Rumanika, sent some men to meet them, supply them with food and conduct them to his presence.

The country was now very wonderful. Day after day they travelled through dense forests or vast stretches of meadow land, in which white and black rhinoceroses abounded, as well as great herds of hartebeest and other horned game.

In due course they came to King Rumanika, a



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powerful monarch of Abyssinian stock, who received them cordially with a handshake—peculiar to that country—and as a great honour took them to see his queen and daughters, who were kept enormously fat by living on a special milk diet. The queen was too fat to stand up, or even to use her arms, and some of her daughters were little better, or worse.

These people—the Bahima they called themselves—were an interesting race. Many centuries ago they must have come from a far-distant land, for they were undoubtedly of non-African origin, and their legends told of a long, long journey made by their fathers when the world was young.

Grant was now so ill that he had to be left in Karagwe. Speke was ready to push on to Uganda, but his companion was unable to walk, owing to an ulcerated leg. So Speke advanced along the western shore of the lake, and was the first white man to set foot in Uganda, which he entered on 16th January, 1862. He found a glorious country, intersected with wide roads cut through the woods and tall grass, clean huts and friendly people, ruled over by a powerful monarch named Mtesa, who sent messengers to summon the new-comers to his palace at once.

After some travelling the king's palace was reached, and Speke was amazed at the great state in which he lived. So dignified was this black sovereign that when the explorer entered the palace, the Englishman was put in a courtyard and told to sit on the ground awaiting his majesty's pleasure. This Speke refused to do, and striding angrily away, had actually reached his own camp before the king sent a conciliatory message and a guard of honour to take the white man to him.

When Speke reached the royal presence he found a young man of twenty-five or so sitting on a red blanket laid on a sort of grass platform. His neck and arms

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were adorned with exquisitely wrought bangles, on every finger and toe he had alternate brass and copper rings. In his hand was a handkerchief of gold-embroidered silk, behind which he laughed discreetly, or whispered to his councillors.

Speke did not know the language, and no one else dared open his mouth, or so much as lift his head, for fear of being accused of *lèse majesté*; so the king and the Englishman sat for a full hour staring at one another, without exchanging a syllable. At last, when the sun was beginning to sink in the heavens, his majesty sent a messenger across to Speke to ask if the latter had seen him. "Yes," said Speke, "for a full hour." Satisfied on this point the king then rose, dismissed the audience with a wave of the hand, and strode away.

All this, however, was but the prelude to another audience. This time the monarch was gaily chatting to a few favourites when Speke was ushered in, while a hundred or more people were gathered around to watch the proceedings. As before, Mtesa gazed at the newcomer in speechless wonder or inexpressible dignity, and after an hour or more of this silent waiting, dismissed them all again. It was not until the third audience that Speke was able to exchange a few words with this mysterious sovereign, who then received his presents and gifts with delight.

Speke's fine flowing beard was the principal cause of wonder amongst Mtesa's people, and the fair Englishman soon became a great favourite with all whom he met in the negro's court, especially as he had the courage to stand up to the king, who was much like the Queen of Hearts in "Alice," and was continually chopping off the heads of courtiers or relatives who displeased him. Speke saved several lives by his intervention and won many firm friends.

Mtesa kept Speke with him for some months, not so



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much refusing to let him go, as putting obstacles in the way of his departure; but at last the explorer insisted upon setting off, for he was anxious to rejoin Grant whom he had not seen for seven months. On 8th July he bid farewell to the all-powerful monarch.

A definite start was now made for the Nile, which, as they had learned at Mtesa's court, flowed out of the Victoria Nyanza. Grant was still too weak to follow the main body of the expedition, so Speke sent him off with a portion of the caravan on a more direct route to Unyoro. On the 21st, Speke attained the first ambition of the expedition, for at last he stood on the bank of the Nile!

At that spot the Nile is a magnificent stream, 600 or 700 yards across and dotted with islets and rocks, upon which crocodiles basked in the burning sun. Hippopotami were snorting in the water, hartebeest grazed in great herds along the surrounding pastures, and, all in all, it was the pleasantest sight, Speke thought, that he ever set eyes upon.

They had come to the river overland, and the explorer now decided to follow up the stream to its outlet from Victoria Nyanza, at the Ripon Falls. These Falls are stemmed by rocky islets, which at that time were crowned by magnificent trees, though they have been cut down since then. Speke says it was a sight that held his attention for hours, the roar of the waters escaping from the huge lake, the thousands of passenger-fish leaping at the falls with all their might, hippopotami and crocodiles basking sleepily in the water, and an occasional Baganda fisherman shooting out in his boat to some islet, with rod and line.

Having thus seen with his own eyes the Nile pouring out of the great lake he had discovered, Speke and his party embarked in five boats, each made of five planks tied together and caulked with rags. All went gaily enough for a short time, but just as they were approach-

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ing Lake Kioga (though Speke never got far enough to know of its existence) they met a canoe full of armed men who, summoning help from the shore, fiercely opposed their advancing any further.

Fighting took place and it became very clear that the Wanyoro would resist to the utmost; so Speke reluctantly turned aside from the river and struck inland, making for Unyoro. On the way he met Grant, who was returning *from* Unyoro; and together the two explorers turned back, thus discovering neither Lake Kioga nor Lake Kwania, through both of which the Nile makes its way northwards.

At Unyoro, dwelt King Kamrasi, a thorough-paced scoundrel, who refused the expedition permission either to proceed or to retire, but for nine days kept them awaiting his royal pleasure before they were so much as granted an audience. Even then it was two months before he would let them go. This was all the more tantalizing as while they were at his court they heard continual mention of another great lake to the westward—undoubtedly the Albert Nyanza, which Sir Samuel Baker was to discover a little later. They could have got to it easily in three weeks; instead of this they were forced to kick their heels at the beck and call of a negro king! To ensure their not giving him the slip, Kamrasi took their guns and ammunition into his own keeping, and refused to give them back except in his own good time, which, as it turned out, was when he had extorted as many presents from the white men as they were able to give him.

During this long stay, however, Speke succeeded in sending his interpreter, Bombay, with a message down the Nile to an ivory merchant named Petherick, who lived at Gani, and was thus able to establish communication with the outside world.

At last, on 9th November, the whole party bid a glad farewell to Kamrasi, and descended the Kafu



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River to where it flows into the Nile. Again the two men were almost delirious with joy as they pushed their canoes out into the great river. Partly by water and partly by land, they now worked their way northwards, past muddy banks on which lay mighty crocodiles, through acres of papyrus reed, along gentle banks covered with trees round which gay convolvuli twined. Floating islands of rush grass and ferns drifted slowly down the stream, proving that the Nile was in full flood.

In this way, sometimes by canoe and sometimes on the banks of the river, Speke and Grant made their way down to Faloro where they met the first signs of civilization again in the person of Mohammed Wad-el-Mek, a very black Sudanese in full Egyptian regimentals, who was in command of an outpost in that remote spot. Drawing his regiment up in line, Mohammed advanced to Speke in stately fashion, then throwing aside his military grandeur, he greatly embarrassed the explorer by suddenly throwing both arms around his neck and kissing him with overpowering effusion, smacking his huge fat lips with the utmost gusto.

Some time was spent with Mohammed Wad-el-Mek, but in due course the two explorers started off again and walked into Gondokoro on 15th February, 1863. There, to his intense joy, Speke met Samuel Baker, an old friend of Indian days, who had come up the Nile expressly to find him.

In something like triumph the whole expedition now went down the river to Cairo. Only nineteen of the original party that had left Zanzibar so gaily reached the end of the journey, the remainder had deserted, died, or been sent back from various points along the way.

Speke and Grant returned to England at once to make known the results of their journey, though neither received the slightest reward for this considerable addition

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to our knowledge of Africa. Not that Speke would have enjoyed it for long, for the year after he came back, he was out shooting one day when, as he scrambled over a stile with his gun at full cock, he accidentally pulled the triggers of both barrels, and a few hours later was dead.

Meanwhile, Samuel Baker, the man who met Speke and Grant at Gondokoro on their return from the Lakes, had been asked by those travellers to return on their tracks and find out the truth about the mysterious lake in the west, which had been spoken of as Luta Nzige. So about a month after Speke and Grant had gone home from Cairo, Baker and his wife set off on their mission, though not without meeting great opposition from Mohammed and the other natives, when they reached Gondokoro. Vast hoards of ivory, gold, and slaves were still to be had from the interior, and the Arabs were determined to prevent their secret preserves from being explored and exploited by the English.

Mr. and Mrs. Baker journeyed southwards through the Lotuka country, a wonderful spot that has been scarcely explored since their time, and after many tribulations, during which most of their men deserted and they were obliged to abandon nearly all their stuff, they at last reached Unyoro, and passed on to Kamrasi's capital.

That great king received them kindly, though he forced them to give up practically all the few possessions they had left. Yet in face of the utmost difficulties, during which Mrs. Baker had a sunstroke which nearly killed her, they advanced, and on 16th March, 1864, a year after their departure from Gondokoro, had the delight of seeing a vast sheet of water stretching into the far distance. It was the lake they had come to find, Albert Nyanza, as they christened it, in honour of the Prince Consort.



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The Bakers were both too ill to do much exploring, but they coasted along to Mangungo, where the Victoria Nile flows into the lake, and then made their way up as far as Murchison Falls, which they named after the famous geologist. "There the river drops in one leap one hundred and twenty feet into a deep basin, the edge of which literally swarms with crocodiles."

At last they set their faces homewards. But they had not gone far before the porters deserted and abandoned them in the heart of a strange country where, for two months, this plucky man and his wife lived on wild herbs and a few grains of bad flour. At last they struggled into Kamrasi's country, to find that shifty monarch at war with one Fowuka, a valiant man whose army threatened to crush the somewhat foolish troops of Kamrasi.

Just as the enemy was about to attack and finally demolish the citadel, Baker broke the Union Jack over Kamrasi's tent, and warned all and sundry that the king of Unyoro was now protected by the Great White Queen. This ruse succeeded, and the enemy retired. Kamrasi was so impressed by the help Baker had given him, that he decided to keep the Englishman and his wife for use in case such a crisis were to arise again. So, deaf to their entreaties, he refused to let them leave his camp.

King Mtesa of Uganda, however, had heard that his neighbour of Unyoro was keeping a white man prisoner in his camp, and at once sent a large army to demand his release. But Kamrasi was not to be caught. He took a hurried departure with his followers, leaving the Bakers at Karuma Falls without food or a single beast of burden. At the same time he sent deceptive messages to Mtesa, leading him to suppose that the Englishman and his wife had left the country and were safely on their way home.

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At last, after many vicissitudes and troubles, the Bakers managed to get to Gondokoro, and long afterwards—in May, 1865—reached Khartum, whence they made their way across to Suakin.

And so, thanks to the bravery and untiring pluck of Speke, Grant and the heroic Bakers, the sources of the Nile and the great African Lakes were added to our maps.



## CHAPTER XV

### Sven Hedin Explores Tibet

**T**IBET, the land of mystery, whose doors have been kept shut so fast against the whole world! How many have tried to penetrate her secrets, and have been rebuffed by the calm, imperturbable men who hold them. Hundreds of miles of Tibet are even yet unknown to Europeans—perhaps never will be known—but the great heart of the secret, Lhasa, has been reached. Bit by bit the rest of the country may one day be opened up. Who knows?

It was in 1899 that Sven Hedin, an adventurous Swede who had already made three daring expeditions into the depths of Asia, set out with the intention of reaching Lhasa, the Secret City. He had already made a bold exploration of Asia by crossing it from West to East, so he was well prepared for the difficulties that lay before him. He knew exactly what to take in the way of equipment and how to set about making an entry into the jealously guarded land of Tibet.

Assisted by the Russian Imperial Government, who had political ends of their own to gain by encouraging the traveller, Hedin and his baggage were taken by rail to Andishan, in Russian Turkestan, whence he would have to cross the mountains to Kashgar, two hundred and seventy miles away. The caravan consisted of seven men, twenty-six horses and a couple of puppies a few weeks old, and they all arrived safely in Kashgar without any incident.

It was here Sven Hedin's work was actually to begin,

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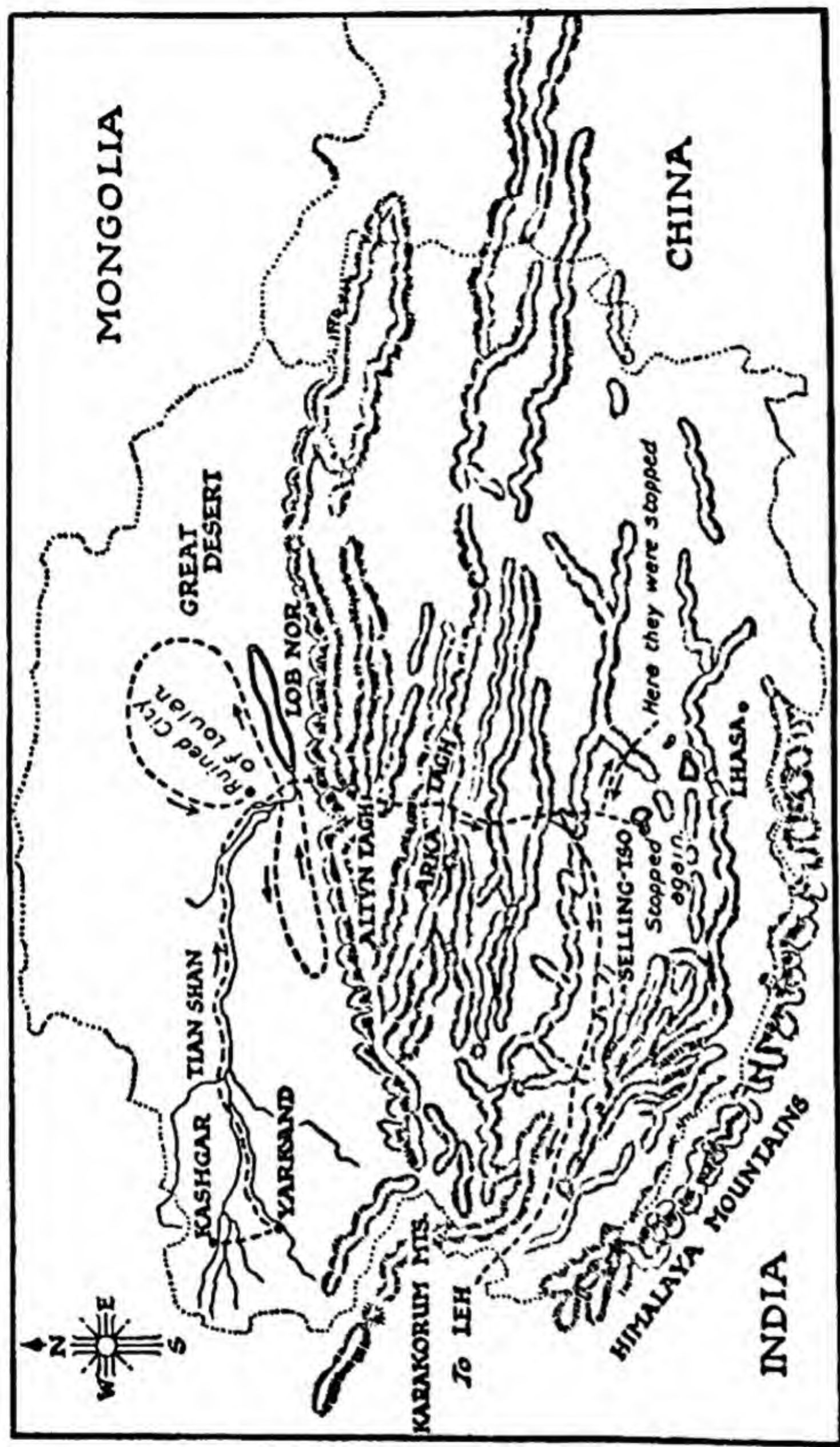
and assisted by various European residents and missionaries he got his expedition together. Money was converted into silver bars; fifteen fine Bactrian camels—splendid two-humped creatures—were bought, and a certain number of men engaged. All was ready for the start by September 5th, and at two o'clock on that day the caravan set forth in blazing sunshine, to the clanging of large bronze bells and the loudly expressed interest of the whole population of Kashgar.

The start was somewhat unlucky, for scarcely had they got a mile or two on their way when a terrific storm swept down, with thunder, lightning and a drenching rain that soaked them all in a moment, and turned the ground into a sheet of soft clay on which the camels slipped as though they had been walking on soap. Piercing shrieks, such as only a frightened or an angry camel can give vent to, rent the air, and every few yards the unhappy beasts had to be helped to their feet again and their burdens adjusted. However, with the coming of night the storm subsided, and by daylight they all started off again.

After six days journey, across the steppes and wilderness, a village on the Yarkand River, called Lailik, was reached. Sven Hedin bought a barge here, on which he packed his effects and a couple of the more intelligent of his followers. It was 38 feet long, 8 feet wide and, when fully loaded, scarcely drew 12 inches of water. A cabin was erected amidships, covered with black blankets and equipped as a dark room, and also fitted with a bunk for Hedin to sleep in. They could afford but little time in equipping this boat, for winter was coming and the river rapidly falling; too long a delay, and they would be icebound. The main caravan went overland with the camels, having directions to meet Hedin at a certain point far down the Yarkand in ten weeks' time.

The barge was ready to start on its long voyage





Outline map of Tibet showing the extent of Sven Hedin's explorations.

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on 17th September, and two of his trusted followers embarked, with a crew of three to work the boat. Two stood in the stern and one in the bow, while a fourth man managed a smaller skiff in tow, on which were fowls, fruit and other provisions.

Drifting down with the current, which was exceedingly rapid, they now began a very pleasant voyage that was to carry them, with many twists and turnings, far on their way to a place called Lop Nor. At first the Yarkand River wound through forests, but after a few days the country changed to steppes—vast expanses of grassland that seemed to stretch away to the distant snow-capped mountains of Tian Shan. They carried passengers sometimes: shepherds and wayfarers who came aboard and gave useful information in exchange for their passage. Beyond a certain curiosity on the part of the few villagers they saw on the river banks, no one paid much attention to them.

After many miles the steppes gave place to forest again, and day after day passed in what seemed like a church aisle, so straight and regular were the tree trunks on each side. Late autumn was turning into winter, and at places the barge was almost stopped by vast masses of leaves that had fallen into the water. At one spot a poplar trunk had fallen and caught in midstream, where it accumulated a large islet of drift-wood, leaves and fallen branches, round which the river dashed in a furious cataract. It needed skilful navigation to get the barge safely past this obstacle.

At last the great length of winding river bore them to Yangi Kol, where they found the caravan already encamped and anxiously expecting them. Here Sven Hedin settled down for the six months of winter during which travelling would be impracticable, writing up his observations, and preparing for the next year's adventures. The river and the large lake near by were frozen over and the cold winds came laden with snow.



## Sven Hedin in Tibet

Keeping his camp as headquarters, Hedin made several short journeys of discovery as spring approached. In March he made a camel dash, with six men, across the bleak, windy steppe to the Konche Daria, the bed of a long-dried river which had once flowed through the vast forests. The whole site was now a clay desert.

As they rode on, sweltering in the heat that became more and more oppressive, a brown-black line suddenly appeared on the horizon. It broadened rapidly and seemed to shoot out arms in all directions.

"*Kara-buran!*—the Black Sandstorm!" shrieked the men.

Before Hedin could even answer, it was upon them. It came like the shot from a cannon, and swept the dry desert with whirling sand that scratched the skin unmercifully and turned the bright sunlight to a twilight dusk. Sheltering his face with his hands, Hedin sought his caravan, but though it could be but a few yards away nothing was to be seen in the flying sand, and so deafening was the noise of the wind that not even a rifle shot could have been heard above it. Luckily one of the men had seen his master and managed to drag him under cover of a hillock, where they were all doing their best to pitch the tent.

Both tent poles were snapped like twigs, and even when the cloth was rigged up on their stumps, the sand beat in until it covered everything. But the flapping rags afforded some little shelter, beneath which they huddled for the twenty-four hours the storm lasted. When at last it swept away to the westward, it left them all dazed, as though they had gone through a long illness.

It was here that they came across one of the rare sights of the world, the tracks of the wild camel, that master of the desert who lives almost inviolate in the least accessible places of the earth. The wild camels require water every eighth day in summer and every fourteenth in winter, and they find their way to the

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springs with extraordinary sureness. They are the hardest things alive to catch, for their sense of smell is so keen that they can smell a man at a distance of twelve miles, and will even avoid a track he has trodden but once, and that a week previously.

Sven Hedin saw the graceful beasts far away, beyond all reach of shot. Even then they scented him and, with a sniff in the breeze, rose to their feet and sped off like the wind.

At last it was time to start the main expedition off on the long journey inland to the place Hedin decided to make a sort of permanent headquarters. Two great mountain ranges lay in the way and would have to be crossed—the Altyn-tagh and the Arka-tagh. Beyond them lay a long stretch of desert to Mandarlik, where the second large headquarters was to be established.

Part of the explorer's scheme was to map Eastern Tibet, of which nothing was known. So on 18th July he started off with a party of eight men and two and a half months' provisions, with seven camels, eleven horses and a mule. They also took sixteen sheep to be slaughtered on the way for food.

The first camp was high up over two passes, 13,000 ft. above sea-level. Stewing as had been the heat down in the great desert, up in the mountains there were ten degrees of frost, and a snow blizzard raged all night. Not only that, but while they were asleep, worn out with the heavy climb, wolves raided the camp and carried off fourteen of the sheep. The larder would have been sadly bare after this accident had they not come across a herd of wild asses a day or two later, and secured a couple of colts for food. Yaks, too, were plentiful, and Hedin was able to shoot a good supply.

Long marches were now the order of the day; up to the heights of the Arka-tagh, where the path led through labyrinths of mountain and gorge, by narrow paths along the edges of cliffs where a single false step



## Sven Hedin in Tibet

would have meant a fall of hundreds of feet to the dim depths below. Now it rained; then hail lashed the hills; and soon afterwards the sun shone so warm that huge bumble bees hummed in the air like organ-notes. In the valleys they came across large herds of antelope, which made all question of hunger a thing of the past.

Sven Hedin was now on new ground, never before visited by Europeans—an absolutely uncharted land. Range upon range of mountains, piled in jagged peaks, stretched before him, and the path lay so high that the camels, who had shed their coats during the heat of the plains in the summer, were now beginning to sicken with the snow and rain to which they were unaccustomed.

At last the high lands opened out into a vast plateau, across which, far away to the south, gleamed the blue waters of a salt lake. Hedin went across with another man to visit it and found that the water was so salt that everything it touched became white. Night fell before they could rejoin their caravan, so they had to camp in the sand, digging themselves graves, as it were, in the warm stuff, where they lay snug and cosy until morning.

Having charted as much as he could of this plateau, Sven Hedin then pushed further westwards into the mountains again, climbing up to a pass 16,780 ft. high. The men now began to feel this extreme altitude, and some of them could hardly walk, so badly were they attacked with a sort of sea-sickness, accompanied by copious nose-bleeding. But there was higher to go yet, and when, a day or two later, they crossed a terrible pass 17,800 ft. high, Aldat, one of the hunters accompanying the expedition, became delirious and had to be lashed into his saddle. The weather was cruel, with snow and a biting wind; and the nightly camps were disturbed by predatory bears and wolves, who nuzzled up to the sleeping men and terrified the camels, ex-

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hausted as they were with the journey. Part of their route, too, lay by great mud tracks, where on one occasion a camel fell in headlong and had to be dug out.

Two months had now passed since they had seen any sign of human life. Indeed, no man could have lived in the fastnesses of those cruel mountains. Aldat the hunter died, a victim to their dizzying heights, even as other victims were to fall to the rigours of the valleys. No grass. No game to shoot. One horse fell down for good, and others were in bad shape. The camels lurched on with half-closed eyes as though only half-conscious with sleeping-sickness. There was scarcely enough maize for two days, and most of the rice had to be given to the animals. Before headquarters were reached they lost a couple of horses and a camel, and were well on the way to perishing themselves from exposure and hunger. But all bad journeys have an end, and so did this disastrous one.

Sven Hedin now moved his whole expedition to the small town of Charkhlik, there to await his arrival in the following spring, while he himself went with a select few to explore a desert city where no European had ever yet set foot. Its very existence, indeed, had been unknown until the present expedition, when Hedin had seen it from afar, during a short excursion from their first headquarters. To reach it now meant a long journey of exploration, and many hardships, across the Gobi desert and again through range upon range of mountains.

The start was made in December, 1900, with eleven camels and six horses. They carried with them six bags full of rice. For ten days they marched across the unknown desert, trackless save for the footprints of wild camels, and smooth as the surface of a lake, but destitute of so much as a single drop of water. Eight, ten, twelve days the camels went on without drinking,



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but by the end of that time they began to show signs of exhaustion.

It was on the morning of the twelfth day that Sven Hedin noticed a number of wild camel tracks converging at the foot of a sort of sandy glen. It could mean but one thing, that the beasts had made their way thither to drink; so he followed it up to its head and there found a huge cake of ice, 40 feet in diameter and 3 inches thick. It was a natural well. The ice was broken into lumps and given to the camels, who crunched it like sugar.

And so they pushed their way on across the desert, often, as it seemed, at the last gasp, but always pulling through when the end seemed inevitable.

After three months travel in this way, they reached the ruins of Lou-lan, the abandoned desert city, which no man had entered for fifteen hundred years! Many of the houses, built of wood and clay-covered wicker-work, were standing almost intact, and within their desolate walls were found scraps of blanket, pieces of red cloth, lengths of rope, odd bits of jewellery, Chinese coins, and even brown human hair! Buddhas and other carvings were also found, and excavations revealed great quantities of documents relating to the long past life of that ancient city.

Though Sven Hedin had neither time nor the knowledge to decipher them, subsequent examination showed that the latest of these papers was fifteen hundred years old, and that Lou-lan, the sleeping city, had once been a place of importance. It fell before the barbarians in the fourth century and, like Pompeii, took with it into the grave the remains of a dead civilization. Some of the papers Sven Hedin found were multiplication tables written out by the boys of an old school; others were business letters, private diaries, personal papers, and so forth.

Having surveyed Lou-lan and its neighbourhood,

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the explorer now returned to High Tibet, and during the spring of the next year worked his way, with the caravan, to a spot 16,800 feet in altitude, situated in a pleasant valley with good pasturage. It was from here that he decided to make his dash to Lhasa.

The surpassing jealousy with which Tibetans at that time viewed any attempt to approach the Forbidden City made it necessary that he should adopt the disguise of a pilgrim, and thus rigged out he set off with two companions, mounted on horses and bearing their provisions on mules. Hedin was dressed in a Chinese skull-cap, with ear-flaps, a dark red Mongolian coat, a rosary round his neck, dagger, chop-sticks, fire-steel, etc., at his girdle, and all else that might make him appear a genuine worshipper at the shrine of the Dalai Lama.

The start was made on 27th July, and they set off with all speed to get as far from camp as possible, for fear any chance pilgrim might pass and identify them. By the second day they had put over thirty miles between them and their base, and then Sven Hedin underwent treatment by Shagdur and Shereb Lama, his two companions. The former shaved his head and moustache, until the Swede was as smooth as a billiard ball, while the other rubbed a mixture of fat, soot and brown pigment into his skin. Never was man better disguised. From that time on no word of any language but Mongolian was used. Shagdur acted as master of the party, while Hedin and Shereb Lama posed as his servants.

For the first few days their journey was in the drenching rain. Now and again they came across Tibetans or pilgrims from other parts, all making their way to Lhasa. Shereb Lama, it should be observed, was really a Buddhist monk, who had been taken on as a guide soon after Hedin left Lou-lan. He had at first viewed the European's attempt with suspicion, but the others had talked him round. But now that they were



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in the path of pilgrims and liable to discovery, he grew more and more nervous, for if he were discovered trying to smuggle a white man into Lhasa, he was sure of death, to the accompaniment of such tortures as only Tibetans can devise.

On 5th August they camped on a small plain and had hardly reached their tent before three Tibetans came riding up to Shereb Lama, demanding who was in his company. His evasive answers confirmed their suspicions, for they went away with dire threats of what would happen if anyone dared to depart before the morrow. In the early daylight they returned with certain local authorities, who examined them all very closely.

Throughout the day the little party was subjected to constant and minute scrutiny by numerous people, official and otherwise. Spies watched them at every turn, and even laid cunning traps to catch them, and to cap it all, poor Shereb Lama was cast into the depths of despair at hearing that Kamba Bombo, Governor of Nakchu, was himself coming to interview them—and he knew Shereb by sight. Once, by way of punishing a lama for a less fault than Shereb was now committing, the delinquent had been ordered to go the entire distance from Urga to Lhasa in a prostrate position—that is, he had to measure the road with the length of his body, lying flat, rising, placing his feet where his forehead had touched the ground, and lying flat again, for mile after mile. It had taken him six years to do the journey.

In due course the great man arrived, mounted on a milk-white mule, wearing a red cloak with skunk sleeves, green velvet boots and a blue Chinese cap. He dismounted in front of the travellers' tent, a servant spread a rug on the ground and Kamba Bombo took his seat, in company with another official, Nanso Lama. He listened affably to all they had to say, but when

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Shagdur, as head of the party, requested leave to continue towards Lhasa, Kamba Bombo answered with a significant gesture of his hand towards his neck that spoke more than any words.

"No," he said; "not a step further. That would cost your heads and mine, too. I do my duty. I get orders from the Dalai Lama every day. You shall go where you like, and at my expense, but not one step further south shall you tread."

He was immovable, inexorable. The Tibetans were resolved to allow no one to enter Lhasa, and though they used no violence, and even maintained an attitude of courtesy and consideration, their will was none the less adamant. Until British troops forced the gateway of Lhasa—and even then not without considerable bloodshed—the City was indeed a Forbidden City to Europeans, and those who had entered it under various disguises could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Such being the state of affairs, Sven Hedin could do nothing but acquiesce. Yet he would not give in without trying a piece of bluff. How would it do, he asked, if Kamba Bombo and he were to ride to Lhasa together? The Tibetan laughed, but shook his head. Certainly he would be delighted to do it, he said, if the Dalai Lama would give him permission. "Then send a courier to ask him," was Hedin's rejoinder.

"No," was the reply. "I should be dismissed at once if I so much as suggested such a thing!" Then he screwed his eyes up, in something of a knowing wink, and pointing at Hedin said the one word—"Sahib!"

He had penetrated the disguise with unerring skill. That Hedin was a Swede, and not an English "Sahib," was no matter. He was European—it was all the same to the Tibetans.

So there was nothing left to do but say goodbye. Kamba Bombo was an honest man, doing his duty. He was as good as his word and sent the travellers on



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their way with a good supply of stores and a troop of cavalry to see they came to no harm—and got up to none. The escort included two lamas who constantly swung their prayer-wheels, mumbling "*Om mani padme hum*"—the great Buddhist prayer. The rest were soldiers, handsome fellows with pigtailed wound round their heads, right arms and shoulders bare, and girdled with scarlet sashes. The horses wore bell-collars that made the valleys gay with their tinkling.

On 20th August the three men got back to headquarters, and the Lhasa dash was at an end.

Sven Hedin now determined to cross Tibet and make his way into India by way of Kashmir and the Himalayas. All went well at first, though it was clear that news of their coming had been passed on, and that watchful eyes were spying on them every mile they traversed. However, they reached the Sachu-tsangpo River and sailed down it some days, to where it emptied itself into a couple of large lakes. All this time the numbers of those that followed them increased, though they kept at a respectful distance. But now, as the caravan camped by the side of a lake, a solemn deputation appeared, headed by two high officials in red robes and Chinese button-caps.

"If you go a step farther either you or we shall lose our heads," they said. "If you persist, we will order our men to hold your animals until they die of hunger. We dare not let you go forward, or our lives will pay for it."

Sven Hedin was now getting tired of the constant threat of beheading. Whatever he wanted to do, it seemed as though his or someone else's head was liable to be whipped off. It was clearly impossible to proceed further southward, so he decided to do the next best thing, which was to cut right through Tibet, under the escort of the Tibetans that had been detailed to see

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that he did not wander from the prescribed path. This meant a three months' journey.

Several of the beasts that had accompanied Hedin through his travels died in the long trek that now began, including a couple of good horses and a veteran camel. Some of the men, too, succumbed to the never-ending march through never-ending valleys, down which the cold mountain blasts whirled with snow and ice. At last a lake was reached. It was frozen over, but could be crossed on sledges drawn by the camels.

Here it was that the Tibetans were dismissed, for Sven Hedin had now reached the frontier of Ladak. A few days later he was at Leh, and back in civilization, after two and a half years wandering in the heart of unknown Asia.

Three years after Sven Hedin's vain attempt to pass the sacred portals of Lhasa in disguise, the Forbidden City was entered to the sound of British guns. The whys and wherefores of the British Expedition—or Mission, as it was more politely called—need not bother us now; suffice it to say, that its nearness to our Indian Frontier and an undesirable hankering of the Chinese and Tibetans for friendship with Russia, made it imperative that a mission should be sent to Lhasa to convince the Dalai Lama of the error of his ways.

So it came about that in December, 1903, Colonel Younghusband was appointed to command a small expeditionary force to make its way, no matter what obstacles were placed in its path, to Lhasa, and there show the Tibetan Government the safe and only path they were to follow in future.

Colonel Younghusband and his force entered Tibet on 13th December and advanced without any opposition across the Tang Pass to the wind-swept plateau of Tuna, where winter quarters were made, at an altitude of 15,300 feet. On the way they passed the great fortress



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of Phari Jong, which might have held them up, but from which never a shot was fired, as the Tibetans had evacuated it the night before the arrival of the British. Three months were spent at Tuna and then the expedition marched on, though not without opposition, towards Lhasa. The Tsang-po river was crossed, and on 31st July the sacred city was no more than forty-three miles away.

Long before the walls came in view the advance guard saw the golden dome of the Potala Palace shimmering in the sun. It stands on a bluff rock in the centre of the mysterious valley. The city itself, though lying in this valley, is hidden from sight by trees and rolling ground until the visitor is within a mile of its walls. Every stretch of the road was marked by cairns, praying-flags, wheels and inscriptions, for Lhasa is the centre of devotion to many thousands, and a sacred as well as a secret city.

The veil of Lhasa was lifted on 4th August, when Colonel Younghusband, at the head of a strong force of infantry, cavalry and guns, entered the city. In front marched the escort of the Amban—the civil governor—a bodyguard of pike-men and warriors armed with scythes, for it was with such arms that the Tibetans hoped to keep Europeans out of their country when they knocked at the door with machine-guns and 18-pounders.

As for the Forbidden City itself, there was little in it to reward those who had come expecting to see marvels. The streets were narrow and dirty, and the only imposing building was the Potala Palace, built around and upon a hill, its golden roofs shining in the sunlight like tongues of fire. But all around lay the city, weltering in filth and squalor that no words can describe. "There is nothing striking, nothing pleasing in its appearance," wrote one who saw it in its prime. "The houses are begrimed with smut and dirt; the avenues filled with dogs, some growling and gnawing

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bits of hide, others limping and looking livid, others starved and dying. In short, everything seems mean and gloomy."

Such was Lhasa, when at last the veil was lifted and the Europeans entered. The Dalai Lama fled and Colonel Younghusband imposed his terms on the officials left in his absence. The episode would not have been mentioned here had it not, in a way, completed the story of Sven Hedin, and shown how yet another secret place of the earth has been opened up.



## CHAPTER XVI

### Grellana and the River Amazon

**F**ROM the first day they set foot in the New World the Spaniards looked upon it merely as an inexhaustible treasure-house, to supply them with wealth to take back to Europe. Peru, Mexico, and Chile were only conquered for the sake of their gold and spices and jewels, and the Spanish pioneers in that vast El Dorado began to look to the huge unknown interior that might yield even greater riches.

In 1539 Francisco Pizarro, the famous conqueror of Peru, was in Cuzco when he heard of a great land beyond the empire of the Incas, a realm of cinnamons and gold, and thither he sent his brother Gonzalo Pizarro to conquer it.

Gonzalo set out from Quito on Christmas Day, 1539, and pushed inland. Up and across the snowy heights of the Cordilleras he passed, where the cold was so intense that many of his Indians were frozen to death, and down the other side of the great mountain chain, to a land where it rained without ceasing every day for two months, and more Indians died from exposure and cruelty.

This was the land of Sumaco, where the cinnamon grew. But Pizarro was not content to stay, now that he had reached the object of his journey. The country was dense forest, and he decided to forge his way through it in search of the gold that might lie beyond, though they were by now so destitute of provisions that he and his followers had nothing but berries and roots to eat.

So they advanced deeper into the country, always

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following the banks of a wide river, the Maranao. Determined to track this to its mouth Pizarro built a wooden barque from the trees he hewed down on the bank, and caulked it with clothing and resin. Upon this he put the treasure they had amassed, amounting to over 100,000 dollars in gold, and many emeralds.

Pizarro now decided to send the barque in advance, under the command of his lieutenant, Francisco Orellana, to a place where Indians assured him was a large city full of provisions and all they could want.

But when he reached the spot Orellana found no trace of a city nor of any provisions. The current that had borne him down from Pizarro was swift and dangerous, and could only with difficulty be fought against if he returned to headquarters, and so, it took little to help Orellana make up his mind to give Pizarro the slip, make his way along the unknown river himself, and so reach Spain—with luck.

Thus did Orellana desert his leader—the only one of our explorers to win fame by a deed of treachery.

The second day after Orellana and his men parted from Gonzalo Pizarro they narrowly escaped being sunk in the middle of the river, as the barque struck upon a floating tree and stove in a plank; but being near the land they ran her ashore, repaired her and continued the voyage. They made twenty or thirty leagues a day, assisted by the current.

Passing the mouths of many rivers on the south side, they continued their course for three days, without seeing any sign of natives; and then, provisions having run short and realizing once again the difficulty they would experience in trying to retrace their course to where they had left Pizarro, they decided to pass on with the current. Food was now so scarce that they had nothing to eat but the skins which formed their girdles and the leather of their shoes boiled with a few herbs.



## Orellana Finds the Amazon

On the 8th January, 1541, when they were practically resigned to death, Orellana heard the drums of Indians sounding afar through the forest, and some six miles further on came upon four canoes full of Indians, who instantly fled. Then a turn of the river brought them to a village round which a great number of Indians were gathered, ready to defend it.

But the armed Spaniards had little to fear from these natives and after a brisk fight they drove the Indians into the forest, entered the village and appeased their hunger on the provisions stored there. During the afternoon the savages returned, and, accepting a few presents from Orellana, were soon induced to bring plentiful stores of food, turkey, partridges, fish and meal. On the following day thirteen chiefs arrived, with feathered plumes and gilt ornaments; whereupon Orellana seized the opportunity of declaring the King of Spain rightful ruler of the country.

Orellana planned to build a brigantine to carry them further down the river. Wood was plentiful, but the absence of nails for a time brought them to a standstill. Before long, however, a couple of men rigged up a little smithy, with bellows made from leather stockings and fired with charcoal. After three weeks hard work they had made a couple of thousand nails. By this time, however, food had run short again, and as nine men had already been lost from hunger since they left Pizarro, Orellana decided to abandon his scheme of building the brigantine, and resolved to get on as fast as he could without it.

Sixty miles below their camp, which was broken on 2nd February, a large river, swollen with the rains, emptied itself into the main stream and very nearly carried the little fleet of canoes away; but they weathered the current successfully and drove down before it for so many miles that all reckoning of distance was lost. Day by day passed, with never a sign of human life on

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the banks, and day by day hunger drove them to greater desperation. At last they arrived at some mean villages where the natives welcomed them and brought forth stores of pigeons and parrots.

Another day Indians met them in four canoes and offered the captain some pigeons, good partridges and fish. They invited Orellana to go and see their chief, who was named Aparia, and who now approached with more canoes. The Indians and Christians landed. Aparia came and was welcomed by Orellana, who treated him to a discourse on the grandeur of the king of Castille and the might of the Spaniards, which the Indians listened to with grave attention.

Aparia inquired if they had seen the Amazons, whom in his language he called *Coniapuyara*, meaning Great Lord. He added that his people were few, while the Amazons were numerous. Continuing the conversation, the captain begged the chief to name all the lords in the country. Having enumerated twenty, he ended by saying that all were children of the Sun, and that as such, he ought to hold them as friends. They ended the council with a feast and much mutual rejoicing, during which the captain took possession of the land in the name of his king.

When Orellana found that he met with so cordial a reception he determined to build the brigantine at this place. As fortune would have it, there was a draughtsman in his company who, though not by trade a shipwright, proved of great use. The timber having been cut and prepared with great labour, in five weeks the vessel was launched, her seams caulked with cotton and then payed with pitch given them by the Indians.

One day four tall Indians came to Orellana, dressed in magnificent robes, their hair reaching to their waists. With much humility they placed food before the captain and said that a great chief had sent them to inquire who these strangers were and whence they came.



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Orellana gave them presents, and after a few fair words on either side, they went their way into the forest, and were seen no more.

The new brigantine being completed and ready to sail, they pushed off from Aparia's village on the 4th April, and went down stream some two hundred miles without meeting a single warlike Indian. The river passed, indeed, through uninhabited country flowing from forest to forest, so dense that they could find no place where they could either sleep or fish. Thus, with herbs and a little toasted maize for food, they drifted on until the 6th May, when they reached a place which appeared to have once been inhabited. Here they stopped to fish and the shipbuilder killed a great iguana with his crossbow. The reptile was on a tree overhanging the river bank, and fell into the water. Soon afterwards a soldier named Contreras caught a fish with a hook, and as the hook was small and the fish large, he had to grasp it with his hand. He felt something hard inside it, and when the belly was ripped open the shot of the crossbow was found in it.

On 12th May they reached the province of Machiparo, which was, in contrast to the deserted region they had passed, densely populated. One morning they discovered a number of canoes full of warlike Indians, with large shields made of the skins of iguanas and tapirs, beating drums and shouting bloodcurdling threats about how they would eat the Christians.

Orellana collected his men together, but to their horror they found that their powder was damp and that in consequence they could make no use of their arquebuses. The Indians came on with their bows, but met with some losses from the Spaniards' crossbows, and while reinforcements continued to arrive a gallant fight was kept up.

In this way they descended the river a mile or two, engaged in a running fight until they reached a place

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where there was a great crowd waiting for them. Here half the Spaniards landed and pursued the Indians to their village, which appeared so large that the officer returned with news of it to Orellana, as he was defending the vessels against the Indians, who were fighting fiercely from their canoes.

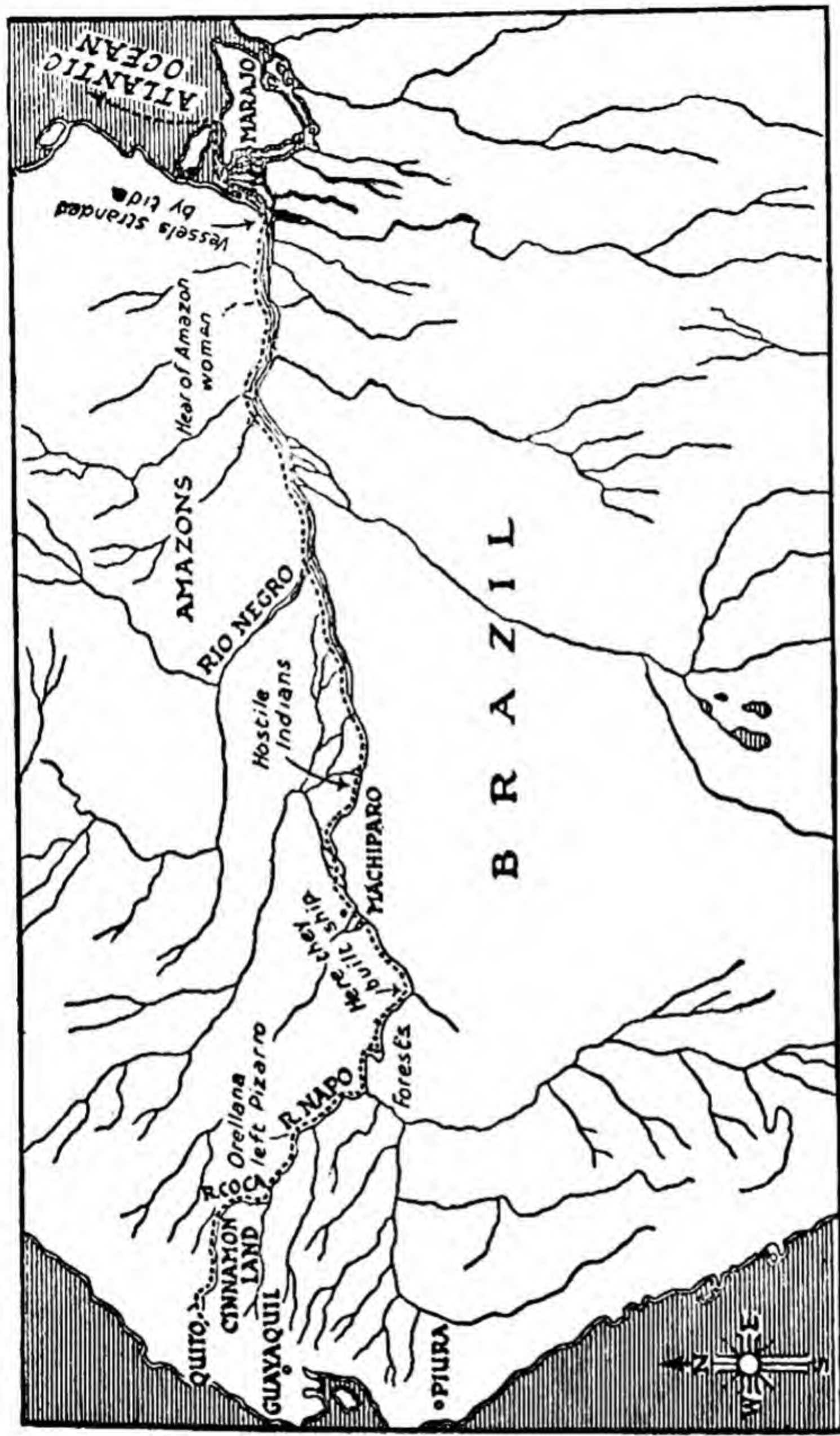
When he heard that the village was well provisioned, the captain ordered one of his men, Cristobal de Segovia, to take it. So off Cristobal started with twelve men, who entered the village and loaded themselves with supplies; but they were attacked by more than two thousand Indians whom they resisted with such vigour that they forced them to retreat, and kept their booty, with only two of them wounded. But the Indians soon returned in greater force and pressing on the Spaniards wounded four others.

De Segovia was not the man to yield to any odds, so putting their backs together he and his men beat a slow retreat to the water's edge. In the meantime another body of Indians attacked the vessels from two sides; but the valour of the Spaniards was proof against the greater numbers, and slowly but surely the day turned in their favour.

The Indians having retired from the field, Orellana set about seeing to his wounded, of whom there were eighteen. All recovered save a man from Ciudad Rodriguez, who died of his wounds. "In this fierce fight none was more valiant than Orellana, whose example and bravery inspired his men to deeds of valour that on other battlefields would have brought them fame."

It was clear that nothing further was to be got in this place, so the captain decided to continue the voyage. Most of the provisions were embarked and all the men then got under weigh, while the Indians on shore, to the number of nearly ten thousand, gave loud shouts, and those in canoes continued to assault the Spaniards with great audacity.





Map of the River Amazon, showing how Orellana followed it from Quito to the Atlantic.

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In this way passed the night, and even when day dawned the fight was kept up. Wearied by the battle of the previous day and a sleepless night of watching and listening, Orellana now determined to put in at an uninhabited island and rest. But crowds of Indians immediately landed and attacked them, so they were forced to embark again. They were continually followed by 130 canoes, containing some thousands of Indians, accompanied by four or five medicine-men, while the noise of their war drums, horns, and shouting was terrifying beyond anything the men had heard before. Had the Spaniards not been armed with arquebuses and crossbows they would have been destroyed to a man, for their enemies came on with determination. At last Orellana sent forward an arquebusier, named Cales, who was fortunate enough to shoot one of the Indian chiefs, and in the commotion caused by this the Spaniards forced their way onwards, though it was two days more ere they were able to throw off their enemies. In this way they departed from the realms of Machiparo.

Having left this host of canoes behind, Orellana and his men came next to a village defended by several Indians, who fled at their approach and left the place in the Spaniards' hands. Here they remained for three days, eating their fill and resting after the excitement. They then put aboard their vessel a good supply of native bread, and set sail, a few miles further on coming to the opening of a great tributary, with three islands at its mouth. Canoes shot out from the banks to welcome them, but did not molest them.

They landed and obtained provisions by barter or force from Indian villages, and at one place found gold and silver which the inhabitants said came from the interior. There were also gigantic figures of wood—idols, no doubt, though no man would say much about them. As a rule the flotilla kept well in the middle of



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the river to be safe from Indians. Sometimes the parts they traversed were well cultivated and gave the impression of being inhabited by a civilized people. On Whit Sunday they passed a large Indian town where the natives shot out in their canoes, but were driven back by a broadside from the arquebuses.

And so the miles sped on, through forest and clearing, the broad surface of the river ever growing wider. Indians, friendly and otherwise, were met with every day, and where food could not be bought it had to be taken by force.

Then one day a curious thing was observed. On the left bank of the Amazon a large river emptied itself, and its waters, almost ink-black, refused to mingle with those of the greater stream, but flowed by its side, with a well-cut line between black and white, for many miles down stream. This was the Rio Negro.

The river soon grew so broad that standing on one bank it was impossible to see across to the other. They came to a place where they seized an old Indian who told them that the territory belonged to the Amazons; and near by they found a house containing many dresses made of different-coloured feathers such as the Indians wore when celebrating their festivals and dances, though the Spaniards mistook them for the robes of female warriors. Afterwards they passed other villages where the natives were shouting and calling furiously from the banks; but on the 7th June they landed at a village without meeting with any resistance, for there was no one left in it but women. They loaded their craft with fish and decided to stay there. At sunset the Indians returned from the fields, and, finding the village full of unbidden guests, seized their arms. But the Spaniards put up a stiff fight and drove them off. On the whole, however, Orellana thought it better to embark his men and set sail.

They had been sailing ever downwards for many

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miles when one day they put into a little island where a native was caught, who told them that away in the interior were many white people with a chief who had led them down the river. All sorts of theories were formed as to who these white folk could be, but there was no time to be spared in going to find them, so Orellana cast off from the island and pursued his course. Gradually the Indians were growing more civilized as the travellers went down stream. At one place they found well-made cotton cloth and ecclesiastical vestments, and everywhere they came across cooking utensils and better furnished huts.

Presently a sudden bend in the river brought them up against a big village from which the Indians advanced in large and warlike canoes. Orellana called to them and offered articles for barter, but they mocked at him, and came on in full array of war. The Spaniards landed and formed up to meet the foe, who attacked with vigour and even wounded five of the mail-clad Europeans. Some of the white men asserted that they saw the natives led by women, and that these women inspired the whole army with their fierceness and courage. They seemed to be very tall and fair, with long hair twisted over their heads, skins round their waists, and bows and arrows in their hands.

It was from these warlike women that Orellana christened the river the River of Amazons, for it seemed that they had actually met the Amazon women-warriors of the ancient Greek stories.

As reinforcements were coming in from other villages, the Spaniards embarked and retired. Discouragement now set in, for they had been travelling many months down the river, and there was no knowing how many more months they would have to go before they emerged into the open sea. The men, indeed, became so restive that Orellana almost lost control, and on one occasion, in positive disobedience to his orders, they attacked



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a village from which they were repulsed with very severe losses.

The country was so densely populated that every caution was necessary, and unless they kept in mid-stream, far from the shore, they had to advance step by step in full military panoply. Forests still lined the banks, swarming with game and full of magnificent oak and cork-trees. The natives were so hostile, however, that it was impossible to get any provisions, and the brigantine sailed down the river, ever followed by fleets of canoes, with thirty or forty men in each, who only waited an opportunity for discharging flights of arrows.

At last, having come to a fairly quiet spot, they determined to rest in the forest. Orellana tried to find out from a captive Indian what the interior was like, but they understood so little of each other's language that nothing of interest or value was discovered.

It was while they had landed one evening to get food from a village that Orellana noticed that the water was falling with the ebb tide. He shouted with joy at the news, for what could that mean but that the sea was near?

Yet they were almost too harrassed to feel all the joy this news should have brought, for the ferocity of the natives who attacked them every hour of every day occupied all their attention. Stout bulwarks had to be built round the brigantine to give cover from the flights of poisoned arrows that were shot from the peria-guas and canoes that ever surrounded them like so many insects.

One day the brigantine lifted with a different roll, and slipped into salt-water. The river was still dotted with islands, and scarcely had this touch of the sea been felt when one of the vessels struck a snag and rapidly began to fill. They landed to get supplies, but the Indians were attacking in such force that they had to retreat to their vessels. When Orellana got back to the beach, what was his horror to find that one of the boats had

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sunk and the brigantine was landed high and dry by the falling tide. There was nothing for it but to fight for their lives. He put half his company with their backs against a wall, while the other half struggled to get the big brigantine afloat and stuff up the hole in the smaller boat. This was all done in safety, and after three hours' hard work the Spaniards embarked with supplies of food and pushed out into mid-channel.

At last the sea came in sight. Rigging was made of grass and sails from the blankets in which they had been sleeping. There was nothing to eat but such shellfish as each was able to pick up, but they had the sight of deliverance at hand. On 8th August they hoisted the sail, gathered a small supply of maize from a village across the river, and then, with neither pilot, compass, nor anything for navigation—without even knowing in which direction they should set a course—they left the mouth of the river and hugged the land. The brigantine and her consort got separated, but after various adventures they met again on 11th September at the island of Cubagua, where white men were dwelling.

It was from here that Orellana set out to tell the King of all his adventures, how he had sailed down the mighty river, which flowed from the West Coast many hundreds of miles to the Atlantic, and how he had taken possession of it in the name of His Catholic Majesty.



